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ABSTRACT

One of six staff development training manuals for career guidance infusion in the elementary school curriculum (K-6), this manual focuses on responsible assertiveness training. It is divided into the following six major sections: (1) a list of the major goals and activities covered in the manual; (2) an overview chart displaying the goals, concepts, time, process, and instructional mode of each activity; (3) specific directions for each activity, including objectives, preparation requirements, and materials/equipment requirements; (4) leader's summaries presenting the background information needed to lead the activities; (5) participant worksheets and handouts; and (6) participant summaries. (See CE 018 130 for the final report of this project.) The material covered by this manual includes basic assumptions and techniques of assertiveness training for both teachers and children and the uses of imagery and relaxation training as tools in assertiveness training. In addition to the other five staff development training manuals (CE 018 139-143), a career guidance methods guide for grades K-6 (CE 018 137) is available. (BM)

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Staff Development K-6

Comprehensive Career Guidance

RESPONSIBLE ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

CE 018 144

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Staff Development

RESPONSIBLE ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

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RESPONSIBLE ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

GOALS

Assertiveness for Teachers

Goal 1 - To understand the basic assumptions of assertiveness training.

Activity 1 - Your Bill of Rights

Activity 2 - What Assertiveness Is and Isn't

Goal 2 - To learn specific ways to get started in learning to be more assertive.

Activity 1 - Pick Your Area

Activity 2 - What's to Lose and Gain

Goal 3 - To learn specific ways of staying with assertive training.

Activity 1 - Your Personal ABC's

Activity 2 - Your Irrational Beliefs

Activity 3 - Four Types of Assertion

Activity 4 - Getting Some Practice

Activity 5 - A Checklist

Assertiveness for Children

Goal 1 - To understand the basic assumptions of assertiveness training with children.

Activity 1 - What <u>are</u> Children's Rights?

Activity 2 - What's in it for Teachers of Assertive Children?

Goal 2 - To learn the steps of assertive training for children.

Activity 1 - The Steps in Assertive Training

Goal 3 - To learn how to use imagery as a tool of assertion training.

Activity 1 - Steps in Guided Imagery

Activity 2 - Themes for Guided Imagery

Activity 3 - Creating a Guided Imagery Format

Goal 4 - To learn how to use relaxation training as a tool of assertion training.

Activity 1 - Steps in Relaxation

Activity 2 - Creating a Relaxation Format

Activity 3 - Sharing Positives Assertively

OVERVIEW

Goal	Concepts	Activities	Time	Process	Mode
To understand the basic assumptions of assertiveness training.	assertion, non-assertion, aggression, rights	*Your bill of rights	10	writing	independent, large group
		*What assertiveness is and isn't	10	discussing, writing	large group, independent
To learn specific ways to get started in learning to be more assertive.	assertion quotient	*Pick your area	15	assessing	independent
		*What's to lose and gain	20	discussing, sharing	small group
To learn specific ways of staying with assertive training.	irrational beliefs, types of assertion	*Your personal ABC's	45	lecture writing discussing	independent, small group
		*Your irrational beliefs	30	discussing	large group independent
		*Four types of assertion	20	discussing	large group
		*Getting some practice	45	role-playing	triads
		*A checklist	15	reviewing	large group

OVERVIEW

Assertivensss for Children

Goal	Concepts	Activities	Time	Process	Mode
To understand the basic assumptions of assertiveness training with children	gains from assertiveness	*What are children's rights?	10	assessing discussing	independent, large group
		*What's in it for teachers?	20	brainstorming	small group
To learn the steps of assertive training for children	assertion training for children	*The steps	20	lecturing discussing	large group
To learn how to use imagery as a tool of assertive training	guided imagery	*Steps in guided imagery	45	experiencing imagery, writing	large group
		*Themes for guided imagery	20	brainstorming, writing	small group large group
		*Creating a guided imagery	60	writing, experiencing, imagery, discussing	independent, dyads
To learn how to use relaxation training as a tool of assertive training	progressive deep relaxation	*Steps in relaxation	30	experiencing a relaxation exercise, writing	independent

OVERVIEW

Goal	Concepts	Activities	Time	Process	Mode
		*Creating a relaxation format	60	writing, experiencing, discussing	independent, dyads
		*Sharing positives assertively	20	sharing	large group

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS

Goal 1: Participants will understand the basic assumptions of assertiveness training.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Participant worksheets 1, 2

PREPARATION: Circle format for chairs to facilitate discussion and cohesiveness.

Activity 1; "Your Bill of Rights"

Objective: Participants will assess their priorities in basic human rights.

Preparation: Ask the participants to look at their worksheet 1. Instruct the participants to put an X by the rights that are especially important to themselves.

Process the exercise by pointing out item 10. Ask whether this was an important right to any of the participants. Note that rights of self and others is a basic concept in assertiveness training.

Activity 2: "What Assertiveness Is and Isn't"

Objective: Participants will define and differentiate between assertiveness, aggressiveness and non-assertiveness.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the leader's summary of assertiveness defined (#1).

Present the material covered in the summary. Incorporate as many examples along with body language as time will permit. Ask for questions and encourage comments as you go through the mini-lecture.

After the presentation ask participants to look at participant worksheet 2 and fill out the definitions. If there is confusion regarding differentiation of terms, clear up through discussion.

Goal 2: Participants will learn specific ways to get started in learning to be more assertive.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Participant worksheets 3, 4, 5.

PREPARATION: Circle format for chairs.

Activity 1: "Pick Your Area"

Objective: Participants will individually assess several areas of possible concern.

Preparation: Ask participants to look at worksheet 3, an assertiveness assessment or the A Q test. Instruct the participants to read the directions and do the assessment individually. Assure the members of the workshop that the responses are confidential.

Activity 2: "What's to Lose and Gain"

Objective: Participants will list losses and gains from learning more assertive behavior.

Preparation: Ask participants to briefly review the short essay on decisions, worksheet 4. Then tell participants they will be looking at both sides (the pluses and minuses) during this exercise. Instruct participants to form small groups of three and look at worksheet 5. An examples of this concept could be:

LOSE	GAIN
1. getting others to do things I don't want to do	1. feel good about myself for doing something I'd prefer not doing, anyway
2. feeling inadequate, small, unprepared	2. feelings adequate. able to handle life

Goal 3: Participants will learn specific ways to pursue assertiveness goals for themselves.

EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS - Chalkboard or newprint and felt pen, participants worksheets 6,7.

PREPARATION: Circle format

Activity 1: "Your Personal ABC's"

Objective: Participants will individually assess their internal thought processes that could create anxiety, frustration, confusion (negative feelings) about taking an assertive stance.

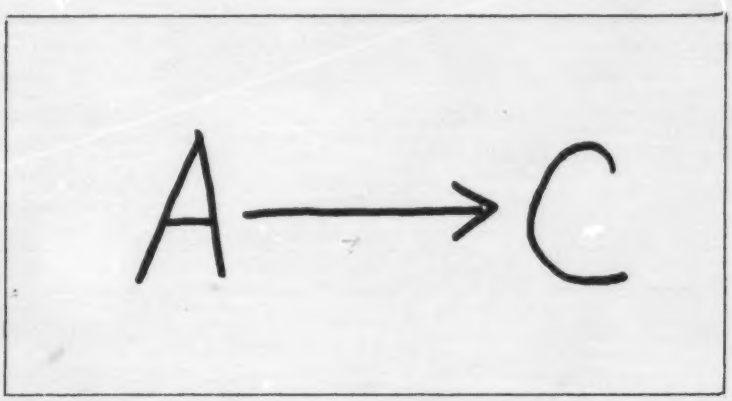
Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the following elements of the presentation of the ABC paradigm and read the leader's summary (#2) on creating feelings.

Following is one way to present the ABC paradigm. Adapt it to your own style.

"So far we have talked about your rights and others' rights as human beings, what assertiveness is and is not, that there are both gains and losses in assertion, and looked at and evaluated some specific situations in terms of your comfort level.

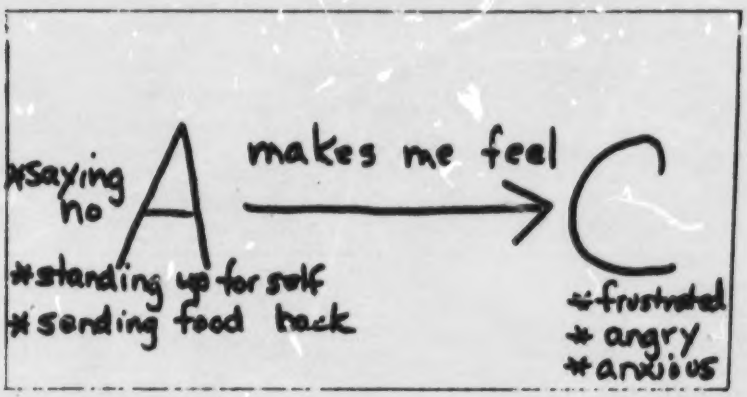
"It would be quite easy to say 'Yes, I know all that, but saying 'No' to my good friends makes me feel anxious - or receiving a compliment makes me feel foolish - or speaking in front of a group makes me feel nervous.'

(Put on a chalkboard or newprint the following:)



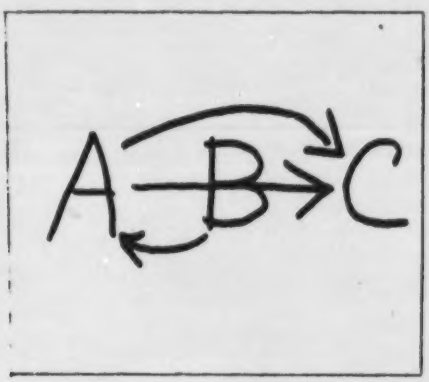
"It's easy, acceptable and common for people to say that the refusing, complimenting, or public speaking (point to A) causes C (point to C), feelings of anxiety, nervousness, foolishness, anger, helplessness, etc."

"What are some other situations (A) and feelings (C) you might have? (elicit from the participants and fill in the A and C parts as below:)



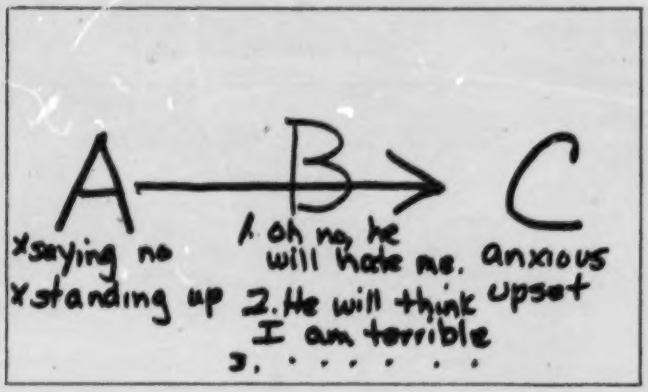
"There is a missing part, though, a middle part that you most likely are quite unaware of -- that an out-of-awareness, often fuzzy B part. That B part is what you are saying to yourself about A:

"The B part (put a B between A and C with arrows)



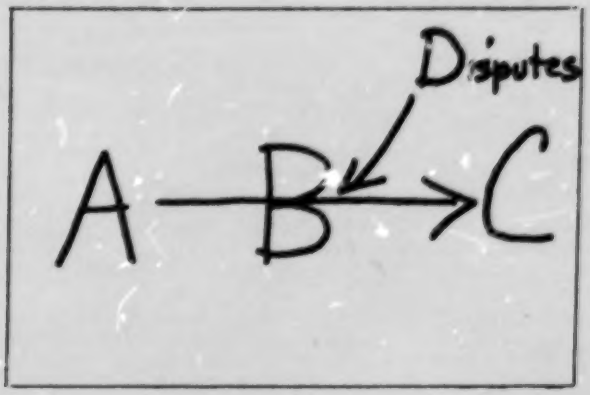
"is like a cassette tape recorder on fast forward. What you say to yourself is so fast and spontaneous that until you tune in to your own internal sentences, they are out of awareness. So, it is not A that CAUSES C, but what you SAY about A in your head that CREATES the feelings at C."

"OK, let's go back to A and carry a situation through. Let's take saying 'No' to a good friend. Remember, it's not saying 'No' that makes you feel anxious or whatever, but what you tell yourself about saying 'No'. The B part might be 'Oh no, he/she will never like me again' or 'He/She will think I am a terrible, stingy person" (put these sentences under the B and elicit other internal sentences from the participants and write them in).



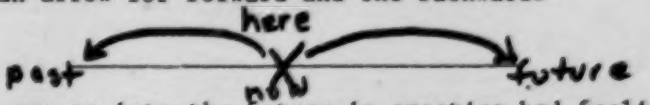
"So now that you are aware of how YOU may be creating the negative feelings of frustration, anger, confusion, etc., what can you do about it? There are several things: (1) by bringing to awareness your internal sentences you will have already taken an important first step. Thus, the first step is recognizing your feelings and asking yourself, "What did I say inside to get myself here?' (At this time, ask participants to look at the participant worksheet, Activity 6 and to fill out the B part)

There are other ways of dealing with B besides awareness. (2) Involved in most internal sentences that create negative feelings are 'catastrophizing' and 'awfulizing' and going into the past and/or into the future. To deal with these involves another part and that is the D or disputing part (go back to the chart and fill in as below:



"Basically, the D part is the disputing of the awfulizing and catastrophy-building elements in B. For example, your B internal sentences may be something like, 'Oh no, he/she will hate me' with the addition of 'forever' and also 'and that's horrible, awful, terrible, the worst thing in the world.' It may indeed be unpleasant, annoying, and mildly fustrating, but it is not awful, terrible or the end of the world. In addition the words 'never' and 'always' carry an absolute connotation that is seldom true and feeds into the catastrophy-building for creating negative feelings."

Finally, if we look at time like this: (draw a line, then an arrow for forward and one backwards



)."

"When you go into the future in creating bad feelings, usually it is to predict doom and gloom - e.g. 'He/she will never get over disliking me.' When you go into the past, it is to ruminate on past bad times, goof-ups and failures -- e.g. 'I said no once and got fired for it."

"To not create negative feelings, the solution is to stay right here, right now. (put in the here and now on the time line). Staying in the here and now can be done by focusing on what you are seeing, hearing and feeling right now. When you become aware of going to the future or to the past, refocus and bring yourself back to what is happening now."

As a group, ask participants to share some of their internal sentences along with the situations and feelings. Discuss briefly any questions or comments. This exercise is a companion to the next activity.

Activity 2: "Your Irrational Beliefs"

Objective: Participants will examine seven common irrational beliefs associated with assertiveness.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the irrational beliefs and their rational counterparts.

Present to the participants in the form of a mini-lecture the following important questions that help to answer whether a person is irrational:

(1) Is there the assumption that other people will ALWAYS react negatively to an assertive behavior? Reactions could be neutral or even positive.

(2) Is there a focus only on the negative outcome of an assertive behavior without considering other options?

(3) Is there the assumption that the person cannot handle negative feedback if that is the result?

Note to the participants that this activity focuses specifically on the D (disputing) part of the ABC paradigm.

Instruct the participants to look at their worksheet 7 and following the directions mark the beliefs they use most frequently to stop themselves.

Process this activity by taking each irrational belief, asking for a show of hands for those who use it frequently, and discussing the rational disputes.

Activity 3: "Four Types of Assertion"

Objective: Participants will look at four types of assertive styles.

Preparation: Instruct the participants to read through the worksheet 8 on styles of assertion. Tell the members that they will be using this worksheet for role-playing in the next exercise.

After the participants have read the worksheet, take each assertion type and briefly review and ask for questions, comments, etc. Remind the participants that it is not simply the words used that make an assertive stance, but relaxed body and positive feelings. A person may say all the "right" words, but if they say the words between clenched jaws, with downcast eyes on locked knees with a prediction that the other

person isn't going to hear anyway, those words will probably not be received as intended.

Activity 4: "Getting some Practice"

Objective: Participants will role-play asse tive behavior.

Preparation: Ask the participants to read the directions for thi activity in worksheet #9. Remind them to use their worksheet #8 as a review of the four assertive styles. Finally, instruct them to imagine themselves in a "sneak preview" before each role-playing by (with eyes closed) seeing themselves looking, behaving and feeling assertive in the situation they have chosen. After the role-playing has begun, mill from group to group with feedback, answers to questions, etc.

Activity 5: "A Checklist"

Objective: Participants will examine a summary checklist for systematically approaching assertion.

Preparation: Ask the participants to go over their worksheet #10 as you briefly go over each step. Answer questions, clarify concerns, and draw out reactions from the group.

Goal 1: Participants will understand the basic assumptions of assertiveness training for children.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Participant Worksheets #11 and #12.

PREPARATION: Circle format.

Activity 1: "What are Children's Rights?"

Objective: Participants will assess their beliefs regarding children's rights.

Preparation: Ask the participants to look at the participant worksheet #11 and to fill it out according to the directions. Point out in the instructions that the age and maturity level of children as well as time for training should be considered.

Process the exercise by asking the participants for feedback regarding rights considered appropriate, inappropriate and questionable. Encourage discussion of reasons for the beliefs and attitudes among the group. Note to the group that frequently children are not considered to have rights by parents and teachers and that children often believe that when a magical age comes (16 years old; 18 or 21), then they will be in charge of themselves and feel personally powerful and effective. However, when that "special" time arrives, frequently children are disappointed and depressed because their feelings about themselves have not altered significantly. If children begin at a young age to feel personally effective, responsible and in charge of themselves, the effect is addictive and children are not "waiting for magic" to happen.

Activity 2: "What's in it for Teachers of Assertive Children?"

Objective: Participants will assess how assertive children might be a positive benefit to themselves and to parents.

Preparation: Ask participants to group into small groups of 3-4 and to fill out worksheet #12. If the participants are unsure of benefits to themselves, some possibilities to share with them could include: 1. less solving of playground problems between children; 2. less time spent with children playing "I can't"; 3. more good feelings about children and less

worrying.

Process this exercise by asking one person from each small group to share the lists formulated. Encourage participants to "copy" ideas from other groups if they choose to.

Goal 2: Participants will learn the steps of assertiveness training for children.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Participant Worksheet #13.

PREPARATION: Circle format.

Activity 1: "The Steps"

Objective: Participants will learn five steps for assertiveness training with children.

Preparation: Read through the Leader's Summary of Assertive Training for Young People #3 . Present the following five steps and ask participants to summarize the steps on their worksheet #13. As the steps are presented, encourage the group to recall their experiences as they went through the steps earlier in the workshop.

(1) Students learning to discriminate between non-assertive, aggressive and assertive behavior.
(2) Students becoming aware of their rights in a variety of interpersonal situations.
(3) Students learning to identify the emotional blocks they use to prevent assertiveness.
(4) Students learning skills to reduce these blocks.
(5) Students developing assertive behaviors through role playing.

Tell the participants that a more indepth summary is provided as a handout. Answer questions and comments.

Goal 3: Paticipants will learn how to use imagery as a tool of assertion training.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Participant Worksheet #14, 15, 16.

PREPARATION: Circle format.

Activity 1: "Steps in Guided Imagery"

Objective: Participants will experience a guided imagery and learn the steps involved.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the following guided imagery script. Embellish or change as is personally suitable. Read the leader's summary #4.

GUIDED IMAGERY

(Ask the participants to first get very comfortable in their chairs because they will be experiencing a guided imagery and you will be thier guide. The first step will be teaching them a breathing exercise that is very helpful for relaxing and then you will take them through a guided imagery.)

"Before I start as your guide on an imagery journey, I want to teach you a breathing exercise that can be extremely helpful in learning to relax your body. You can use this breathing technique in almost any setting - it is helpful for getting to or back to sleep and for specific or general tenseness.

"First of all, get comfortable in your chair. Remove all paper, pencils, purses, etc. from your lap or hands. I'm going to tell you about how this breathing technique works and then do it with you so you can experience it. Basically, it works by breathing in to a count of 2, holding your breath in your lungs to a count of 2, then exhaling through your nose to a count of 4 and holding to a count of 4, then starting the cycle again. So, to summarize, the technique is to inhale and hold to a count and then to exhale and to hold twice that count. The numbering will go from 2 and 4 to 3 and 6 to 4 and 8,

etc. In the beginning, however, we will go from 2 and 4 to 3 and 6. Holding to longer counts takes more practice.

"Ok, let's practice. Close your eyes for the best effect, but it is not absolutely necessary. Take a couple of deep breaths now. Ok, now:

	BREATHE IN :	1-2
Repeat	HOLD :	1-2
about 10	BREATHE OUT:	1-2-3-4
times	HOLD :	1-2-3-4

keeping a steady pace.

	BREATHE IN :	1-2-3
Repeat	HOLD :	1-2-3
about 10	BREATHE OUT:	1-2-3-4-5-6
times	HOLD :	1-2-3-4-5-6

keeping a steady pace.

"Now you continue counting in your head for a couple of more minutes.

"Now stop counting and begin your normal breathing rate and very slowly open your eyes paying attention to how you feel. How many of your are feeling somewhat more relaxed? As you do this on a regular basis, like once a day for 10-15 minutes, your lung capacity will grow and it becomes more relaxing.

"At this time, if there are no more questions or comments, I'd like you to experience a guided imagery. So, close your eyes again and get comfortable in your chair. I want to do the breathing exercise again with you, so

	BREATHE IN :	1-2
Repeat	HOLD :	1-2
about 10	BREATHE OUT:	1-2-3-4
times	HOLD :	1-2-3-4

"Now, in your mind's eye let yourself see a green forest with trees, moss, grass, wild flowers. It's towards the end of the day so it's beginning to get dark. Be there in the forest. See the trees and growing things, hear the birds as they call and sing back and forth, smell the forest smells, feel the coolness of the air as evening approaches. Now notice in front of you a narrow path. Make your way towards the path. You're getting closer to it and now you are

following it as it winds among the trees, flowers, and other growing things. Continue walking, noticing, smelling, feeling and hearing your environment. Now look ahead and notice a clearing up ahead. See that there is a figure of a person there, a person who you can't make out or identify because the person is in the shadows, but you know that person is waiting for you and is kind and understanding. As you are walking and getting closer to that person, you are now beginning to identify the person and as you are looking closer you are now seeing that person is YOU. The figure is the part of you that feels good about you, that is assertive and respects your own rights as well as others. It's the you that communicates in a comfortable, open and honest way. It's the you that feels relaxed and in charge of your feelings and thoughts. Notice how that assertive you is standing, the facial expression as you approach. Walk up to that assertive you and begin talking. Are there any questions you want to ask, what do you want to say to that competent, effective and assertive you. Say what you will let yourself and listen to the responses.

"Now let yourself become that assertive you for a few minutes. For awhile become that person looking back. What do you have to say? How can you be helpful? In what ways does this person block themself from being as assertive as they could be? What advice do you have to give? Continue the dialogue.

"Now, be yourself again. Say whatever you need to in order to close off your dialogue and meeting for now.

"Turn around now and walk back on the winding path. It's a little darker, hear the evening as it approaches. As you walk from the clearing, walk back towards this room, back into now and become more aware of being here. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes, stretch, move as you feel like doing. In a few minutes we will process this experience."

Process this exercise by asking the participants what their experience was like. Did they let themselves become involved? If not, how did they stop themselves. Note to them that not everyone will create imagery at will, but that everyone creates imagery from time to time, i.e. imagining a vacation spot, seeing a disapproving look before doing something, remembering and seeing past events, etc.

Ask the participants to look at participant worksheet #14 and to summarize for themselves as you go through the following steps in guided imagery:

(1) Help students become relaxed -- breathing, closing eyes, relaxation exercises, etc.
(2) Set the scene by using descriptions that use all of the senses -- hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling, etc.
(3) Keep instructions in the present tense -- happening right now.
(4) Provide structure, but let the students fill in their individualized specifics; so allow for pauses and breaks in instructions.
(5) Guide the students back from an imagery session gradually without any abruptness.

Activity 2: "Themes for Guided Imagery"

Objective: Participants will brainstorm possible themes for guided imagery for the elementary aged student.

Preparation: Point out to the participant that many themes for guided imagery can be appropriate for the elementary aged student. The purpose of this exercise is to formulate possible themes that are associated with assertiveness and positive stances that reflect being in charge of oneself.

Instruct the participants to group into small discussion groups of 4-5 and to look at the worksheet #15. Share some of the following themes for assertive behaviors and being in charge: saying hello to someone who is still angry when you want to "make up"; finding a strong, capable part of you and getting some advice; facing a fear, practicing a scary upcoming event.

Activity 3: "Creating a Guided Imagery"

Objective: Participants will write a guided imagery and practice it with a partner.

Preparation: Instruct the participants to look at their worksheet #16 and read the task directions. Point out that they may use a theme from the previous small group exercise or make up a new one. Tell the participants to follow the steps in worksheet #14. Instruct the group to work independently and after completing the guided imagery to find a partner to take through.

As the guided imagery formats are completed and partners are found, remind the pairs to give each other feedback about (1) what the experience was like positively and negatively for the person experiencing it, and (2) what the experience was like for the person guiding.

Process the exercise by asking the participants to share some of their experiences as a guide and being guided.

Goal 4: Participants will learn to use relaxation training as a tool of assertian training.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Participant Worksheets #17 and #18.

PREPARATION: Circle format.

Activity 1: "Steps in Relaxation"

Objective: Participants will experience progressive deep relaxation techniques and learn the steps involved in the process.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the relaxation script that follows.

Introduce this aspect of assertion training by focusing on the idea that if one is relaxed, it is diffiuclt to be tight. Frequently people in anticipation of one or more of their irrational beliefs tighten up their muscles as though ready for the ancient "fight or flight" reaction to perceived danger. If one learns to relax specific body parts at will along with the assertive words and behaviors, more congruent and integrated as well as permanent behavior and attitude change can be expected.

Ask the participants to get comfortable in their chairs and to remove paper, etc. from their hands and laps. Tell them that you will be reading to them a progressive deep relaxation script designed for elementary aged children. The script also uses imagery. You might want to begin with the breathing exercise, but it is not a necessary component.

Relaxation Training Script

Introduction

Today we're going to do some special kinds of exercises call "relaxation exercises." These exercises help you learn how to relax when you're feeling uptight and help you get rid of those butterflies-in-your-stomach kinds of feelings. They're also kind of neat, because you can do some of them in the classroom without anybody noticing.

In order for you to get the best feelings from these exercises, there are some rules you must follow.

First, you must do exactly what I say, even if it seems kind of silly. Second, you must try hard to do what I say. Third, you must pay attention to your body. Throughout these exercises, pay attention to how your muscles feel when they are tight and when they are loose and relaxed. And, fourth, you must practice. The more you practice, the more relaxed you can get. Does anyone have any questions?

Are you ready to begin? Okay. First, get as comfortable as you can in your chair. Sit back, get both feet on the floor, and just let your arms hang loose. That's fine. Now close your eyes and don't open them until I say to. Remember to follow my instructions very carefully, try hard, and pay attention to your body. Here we go.

Hands and Arms

Pretend you have a whole lemon in your left hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon. Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed. Take another lemon and squeeze it. Try to squeeze this one harder than you did the first one. That's right. Real hard. Now drop your lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Once again, take a lemon in your left hand and squeeze all the juice out. Don't leave a single drop. Squeeze hard. Good. Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand. (Repeat the process for the right hand and arm.)

Arms and Shoulders

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, kittens, let's stretch again. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them over your head. Pull them back, way back. Pull hard. Now let them drop quickly. Good. Notice how your shoulders feel more relaxed. This time let's have a great big stretch. Try to touch the ceiling.

Stretch your arms way out in front of you. Raise them way up high over your head. Push them way, way back. Notice the tension and pull in your arms and shoulders. Hold tight, now. Great. Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Shoulder and Neck

Now pretend you are a turtle. You're sitting out on a rock by a nice, peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun. It feels nice and warm and safe here. Oh-oh! You sense danger. Pull your head into your house. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. It isn't easy to be a turtle in a shell. The danger is past now. You can come out into the warm sunshine, and, once again, you can relax and feel the warm sunshine. Watch out now! More danger. Hurry, pull your head back into your house and hold it tight. You have to be closed in tight to protect yourself. Okay, you can relax now. Bring your head out and let your shoulders relax. Notice how much better it feels to be relaxed than to be all tight. One more time, now. Danger! Pull your head in. Push your shoulders way up to your ears and hold tight. Don't let even a tiny piece of your head show outside your shell. Hold it. Feel the tenseness in your neck and shoulders. Okay. You can come out now. It's safe again. Relax and feel comfortable in your safety. There's no more danger. Nothing to worry about. Nothing to be afraid of. You feel good.

Jaw

You have a giant jawbreaker bubble gum in your mouth. It's very hard to chew. Bite down on it. Hard! Let your neck muscles help you. Now relax. Just let your jaw hang loose. Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop. Okay, let's tackle that jawbreaker again now. Bite down. Hard! Try to squeeze it out between your teeth. That's good. You're really tearing that gum up. Now relax again. Just let your jaw drop off your face. It feels so good just to let go and not have to fight that bubble gum. Okay, one more time.

We're really going to tear it up this time. Bite down. Hard as you can. Harder. Oh, you're really working hard. Good. Now relax. Try to relax your whole body. You've beaten the bubble gum. Let yourself go as loose as you can.

Face and Nose

Here comes a pesky old fly. He has landed on your nose. Try to get him off without using your hands. That's right, wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch your nose up real hard. Good. You've chased him away. Now you can relax your nose. Ooops, here he comes back again. Right back in the middle of your nose. Wrinkle up your nose again. Shoo him off. Wrinkle it up hard. Hold it just as tight as you can. Okay, he flew away. You can relax your face. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose that your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help you, and they get tight, too. So when you relax your nose, your whole face relaxes too, and that feels good. Oh-oh. This time that old fly has come back, but this time he's on your forehead. Make lots of wrinkles. Try to catch him between all those wrinkles. Hold it tight, now. Okay, you can let go. He's gone for good. Now you can just relax. Let your face go smooth, no wrinkles anywhere. Your face feels nice and smooth and relaxed.

Stomach

Hey! Here comes a cute baby elephant. But he's not watching where he's going. He doesn't see you lying there in the grass, and he's about to step on your stomach. Don't move. You don't have time to get out of the way. Just get ready for him. Make your stomach very hard. Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight. Hold it. It looks like he is going the other way. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. Oops, he's coming this way again. Get ready. Tighten up your stomach. Real hard. If he steps on you when your stomach is hard, it won't hurt. Make your stomach into a rock. Okay, he's moving away again. You can relax now. Kind of settle down, get

down, get comfortable, and relax. Notice the difference between a tight stomach and a relaxed one. That's how we want it to feel--nice and loose and relaxed. You won't believe this, but this time he's really coming your way and no turning around. He's headed straight for you. Tighten up. Tighten hard. Here he comes. This is really it. You've got to hold on tight. He's stepping on you. He's stepped over you. Now he's gone for good. You can relax completely. You're safe. Everything is okay, and you can feel nice and relaxed.

This time imagine that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence and the boards have splinters on them. You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through. Suck your stomach in. Try to squeeze it up against your backbone. Try to be as skinny as you can. You've got to get through. Now relax. You don't have to be skinny now. Just relax and feel your stomach being warm and loose. Okay, let's try to get through that fence now. Squeeze up your stomach. Make it touch your backbone. Get it real small and tight. Get as skinny as you can. Hold tight, now. You've got to squeeze through. You got through that skinny little fence and no splinters. You can relax now. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs. You can feel really good now. You've done fine.

Legs and Feet

Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. If feels good to be relaxed. Back into the mud puddle. Squish your toes down. Let your leg muscles help push your feet down. Push your feet. Hard. Try to squeeze that mud puddle dry. Okay. Come back out now. Relax your feet, relax your legs, relax your toes. It feels so good to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel kind of warm and tingly.

Conclusion

Stay as relaxed as you can. Let your whole body go limp and feel all your muscles relaxed. In a few minutes I will ask you to open your eyes, and that will be the end of this session. As you go through the day, remember how good it feels to be relaxed, just as we did in these exercises. Practice these exercises every day to get more and more relaxed. A good time to practice is at night, after you have gone to bed and the lights are out and you won't be disturbed. It will help you get to sleep. Then, when you are a really good relaxer, you can help yourself relax here at school. Just remember the elephant, or the jaw breaker, or the mud puddle, and you can do our exercises and nobody will know. Today is a good day, and you are ready to go back to class feeling very relaxed. You've worked hard in here, and it feels good to work hard. Very slowly, now, open your eyes and wiggle your muscles around a little. Very good. You've done a good job. You're going to be a super relaxer.

After the participants have stretched and refreshed themselves, ask for personal feedback regarding what the experience was like.

Then, share with the participants the following theoretical aspects of progressive deep relaxation training:

(1) the tightening and loosening of specific muscle groups, teaches the discrimination between tension and relaxation. Often persons are tense and do not realize it. Frequently, extra tension is unnecessarily carried around.
(2) after discrimination is learned, unnecessary tension can be pinpointed and relaxed at will.
(3) the procedure is simple, easy to use in most any setting.

Have the participants look at their worksheet #17 and summarize the steps on that page. Also point out that the entire relaxation script you read is within a handout they will receive. Following are the steps of relaxation:

(1) pick a time for training that will be uninterrupted and without an abrupt ending possibility, i.e. the recess bell ringing at the end.

(2) teach the different muscle groupings two or three at a time.
(3) set aside 10-15 minutes per session two to three times a week.
(4) use repetition more than is indicated in the script.
(5) slowly end each of the relaxation training sessions. Children "get into" these more easily than adults. A proper ending is as important as a good beginning.

Activity 2: "Creating a Relaxation Format"

Objective: Participants will write a relaxation script and try it out with a partner.

Preparation: Have the participants look at their worksheet #18. Using worksheet #17, instruct them to write a relaxation script for two muscle groupings that also incorporates imagery. Tell them when finished to find a partner, to try the scripts out and to give feedback to each other.

Process this exercise by asking some of the willing participants to read their script for various muscle groupings. Invite feedback for the entire experience.

Activity 3: "Sharing Appreciations Assertively"

Objective: Participants will share and accept appreciations with each other from an assertive stance.

Preparation: Briefly and informally, share with the group that all too frequently assertiveness is seen only as a means to giving negative feedback, saying no or standing up for rights. Assertiveness also includes sharing positive feelings and strokes in an open, honest, straight forward manner.

Ask the participants to move their chairs, etc. out of the way and to mill around the room, make eye contact and share positive strokes with others. Instruct the receivers to accept the assertive strokes without discounting them, i.e. laughing, explaining, negating, but instead to say "Thank you."

LEADER'S SUMMARIES

Leader's Summary of Assertiveness Define #1

Rationale

Assertion training is primarily concerned with two major interpersonal goals - anxiety reduction and social skill training. Behaviorally speaking, an individual who is assertive can establish close, interpersonal relationships; can protect himself from being taken advantage of by others; can make decisions and free choices in life; can recognize and acquire more of his interpersonal needs; and can verbally and nonverbally express a wide range of feelings and thoughts, both positive and negative. This is to be accomplished without experiencing undue amounts of anxiety or guilt and without violating the rights and dignity of others in the process. In addition to reducing anxiety and guilt so that previously learned behaviors can be carried out more effectively, assertion training attempts to teach new verbal and nonverbal communications skills that were previously lacking in the individual's repertoire.

One of the major goals of assertion training is to support the individual's recognition of himself as an important living being who is entitled to his thoughts, emotions, and feelings which need not be negotiated away to others with the resulting loss of self-respect or dignity. Although assertion training has been discussed and researched primarily by behavioral therapists, its underlying philosophy is also very consistent with a humanistic orientation. Assertiveness involves the recognition and expression of an individual's wants, values, needs, expectations, dislikes, and desires. As such, this not only involves getting in better touch with yourself, but also affects how you interact with other human beings.

To begin with, we believe that you must not only know yourself in terms of likes and dislikes, needs and desires, strengths and weaknesses, but also that you must learn to like and feel comfortable with yourself. Before you can expect to nourish others, you must first understand and take care of yourself. The most important thing in you life is you-only if you respect and take care of yourself will you be able to be of ongoing help to others.

This is not to say that the attitude "by helping others, you help yourself" is incorrect. However, if you constantly live your life only for your children, your spouse, or your boss and without reference to yourself and your own needs, you will eventually begin to feel bitter and resentful. As a result, you may begin to avoid these people and might even terminate these relationships. There is absolutely nothing wrong with helping others - as long as it does not repeatedly interfere with your own needs, self-respect, or dignity. At the very foundation of assertion training and the humanistic philosophy can be found a recognition

of the value of human worth and the unique nature of each human being. Each of us has an individual value system and the right to believe in and desire certain things. We may not always get what we desire, but we still have the right to want, especially when these wants do not interfere with the safety or self-respect of others.

To express one's desires and values without infringing upon the rights of others is a basic step in learning to be assertive. We can conceive of no social interaction where one person should be the underdog or scapegoat for another person. We strongly endorse the equality of all human beings - the equality of women with men, of children with adults, of employees with employers, of customers with business people, of aged with youth. We cannot conceive of an interaction where one individual should have to negotiate away or lose his dignity as a person.

As Glasser (1965) has indicated, there is the need to feel worthwhile, the need to care for and love others, and the need to be cared for and loved by others. We understand that in order for us to have our own needs filled in a relationship, we must be prepared to fill the needs of others as well. However, this can be done without losing sight of the fact that our own needs and values are also important and should not be sacrificed in the process. In assertion training, we have frequently encountered individuals who do not exercise the option of saying "No" or "Yes" or "I want." Our experience with these individuals has been that, although they are smiling and giving on the exterior, inside they can be very angry and resentful of the fact that they are always giving and seldom receiving. As a result, it is often difficult for these individuals to achieve a lasting and meaningful relationship with other people.

Once the individual is able to recognize, feel comfortable with, and satisfy some of his own personal needs, then it is much easier and more enjoyable for him to respond to the needs and values of others. He can then truly give more of himself and feel better in the process of nourishing others. For those individuals who are basically assertive, taking care of oneself and the nourishing of others occur simultaneously. However, for those who have not learned to love and respect themselves, this is the first order of business.

Occasions for assertive behavior

Reducing interpersonal anxiety, promoting more open and successful communication, expressing positive feelings of love and appreciation, enhancing feelings of self-respect and dignity in confrontations with others - these are some of the situations where assertive behaviors are appropriate. Whether it involves meeting and establishing a relationship with someone you do not know very well, expressing an annoyance to a good friend, or disarming anger and sorting issues with a fellow employee, we believe that an individual who is assertive will be able to handle the

situation more successfully. It is recognized that the assertive individual may not be successful or satisfy his needs in every situation that he acts assertively, or even that he will respond assertively on each and every occasion that he has the opportunity to do so. However, by knowing how to respond assertively and by choosing to do so in certain situations, the individual will be able to satisfy more of his needs than by making no response or responding in a nonassertive or aggressive manner.

In some situations, the individual may know how to respond assertively and deliberately choose not to do so if he feels that the consequences of his assertiveness will be too punitive. For example, an individual may not ask his boss for a raise if he feels that this request will more than likely result in the loss of his job which he needs to keep at this time. On the other hand, he may choose to take the risk of losing a job, dissolving a marriage, or alienating a friend if he feels that to maintain the relationship will result in a significant loss of self-respect or dignity. Consequently, the individual must not only know how to apply assertive behaviors in real-life situations, he must be able to evaluate the situation and discriminate as to when assertive behaviors will yield punitive consequences as well as benefits.

The Nonassertive Person

The nonassertive person, because of high levels of anxiety, guilt, or deficiencies in social skills, tends to bottle up emotions ranging from warmth to anger. As a result, this individual may experience difficulty in being able to do things such as ask for some need to be satisfied (e.g., "I want to make love tonight"); socialize comfortably with other people at work or at a party; speak up in a discussion and voice an opinion; express feelings or thoughts, positive or negative, to a friend, spouse, relative, or acquaintance; return some merchandise to a store; accept a compliment without refuting or demeaning the compliment; and so on. In addition nonassertive individuals are often "victimized" by others in the sense that they cannot do things such as say "No" to an unreasonable request by someone else (e.g., Say "No" to a friend who wants to borrow a highly valued car; say "No" to a pushy salesperson; refuse to watch a neighbor's kids when not really wanting to do this). They may also be unable to verbally protect themselves when someone is criticizing them or screaming at them unfairly. Nonassertive individuals tend to be overly apologetic, saying, "I'm sorry" a good deal of the time when they do not actually mean it. As a result, nonassertive individuals are often depressed, have a poor self-concept, and see themselves as being at the mercy of the world around them.

The Aggressive Person

At the other end of the nonassertive/assertive/aggressive continuum, there are the aggressive individuals who do get more of their needs met,

but often at the expense of someone else's dignity or self-respect. The aggressive person is someone who may explode at the slightest provocation and may be prone to physical fighting when angry or frustrated. The aggressive individual may also embarrass and put down others by name-calling or using obscenities when his needs are not being met. For example, at a restaurant the aggressive individual may scream at the waitress when the food is not served to his liking, whereas the nonassertive individual would be more likely to rationalize the situation, eat the food and say nothing. The aggressive person dominates most conversations without letting others talk and continues to "attack" and criticize people even after they have tried to back away from the situation.

Aggressive individuals, like their nonassertive counterparts, may experience concern over their poor relationships with others. These people, too, may be experiencing high anxiety, guilt, or deficiencies in social skills. They may even be nonassertive in many situations, often hiding their feelings. However, when a number of these nonassertive experiences accumulate, they tend to lose control and explode at the next unsuspecting person who in any way angers or frustrates them. Whereas the nonassertive individual is frequently "victimized" by others and, consequently, may tend to avoid others, the aggressive individual is avoided by others who cannot predict or tolerate this behavior.

The end result is the same in the sense that both ends of the nonassertive/assertive/aggressive continuum leave the individual with few meaningful relationships. One of the basic goals then of assertion training is to help the individual find the middle ground between nonassertion and aggression where he can relate more effectively and successfully with other human beings, can be more responsive to others, and, at the same time, can acquire more personal needs and preserve feelings of self-worth.

Cotler, S.B. and Guerra, J.J. Assertion Training, A Humanistic-Behavioral Guide to Self-Dignity, Research Press: Champaign, Ill., 1976.

Leader's Summary on Creating Feelings #2

A - Activity, action, agent

B - Belief about the activity, action, agent

C - Consequences of behavior and belief

Rational-Emotive Therapy is based upon the belief that emotional disturbances are produced by our illogical or false beliefs about how we should behave in the social world. These false beliefs are inculcated within us as a result of our ability to symbolically (linguistically) introject our parent's attitudes and identify ourselves with them, as well as to introject the attitudes about how we should behave from those significant others in our social environment.

Ellis believes there are two classes of emotive reactions which we experience. The first class of emotive reactions are what Ellis calls feelings. These are essentially reactions to physical sensations which are experienced as either pleasant or painful reactions. Good examples of these kinds of reactions are: burning ones hand on a stove, which produces a painful reaction, or drinking a cool glass of iced tea after a strenuous game of tennis, which produces a pleasurable reaction. The second class of emotive reactions are what Ellis terms as emotions. Emotions are characterized by sustained thought about an action. Much of what we call emotions are nothing more than a certain kind of bruised, prejudicial, or strongly evaluative kind of thought about some event which directly or indirectly effects us.

Achieving control of our emotions can be accomplished by rigorously challenging our internalized sentences and replacing them with more logical ones. This entails changing our irrational belief structure and replacing it with a more rational and relatively impersonalized belief structure.

One way of starting to control our emotions is to recognize the twelve irrational beliefs which usually lead to self-inhibiting and self-limiting behavior. Once these irrational beliefs are recognized they can be vigorously challenged with their logical equivalents.

Ellis contends that each of these twelve irrational beliefs is founded upon a definitional assumption and each one of them has no basis in empirical fact or common sense. Adherance to these beliefs in almost all cases is at the bottom of a person's irrational self-talk, which actually produces the emotional disturbances that are holding individuals back from achieving adequate adjustments to themselves and life.

The Dozen Irrational Beliefs

Which Create and Maintain Sustained Emotional Dysfunction

1. The belief that it is an absolute necessity for any human being to be loved or approved by virtually every significant other person in the community.
2. The belief that one should be thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving in all possible respect if one is to consider oneself worthwhile.
3. The belief that certain people are bad, wicked, villainous and that they should be severely blamed, and punished for their villainy.

4. The belief that it is awful and catastrophic when things are not the way one would very much like them to be.

5. The belief that human unhappiness is externally caused and that people have little or no ability to control their sorrows and disturbances.

6. The belief that if something is or may be dangerous or fearsome one should be terribly concerned about it and should keep dwelling on the possibility of its occurring.

7. The belief that it is easier to avoid than face certain life difficulties and responsibilities.

8. The belief that one should be dependent on others and needs someone stronger than oneself on whom to rely.

9. The belief that one's past history is an all-important determiner of one's present behavior and that because something once strongly affected one's life, it should indefinitely have a similiar effect.

10. The belief that one should become quite upset over other people's problems and disturbances.

11. The belief that there is invariably a right, precise, and perfect solution to human problems and that it is catastrophic if this perfect solution is not found.

12. The belief that human happiness can be achieved by inertia and inaction.

Rational views on the twelve irrational beliefs are as follows:

1. It would be more advisable and productive for human beings to concentrate on self-respect, or winning approval for practical purposes, and on loving instead of being loved.

2. It is better for human beings to strive to do well for their own sake rather than always trying to do better than someone else. It is better to enjoy the activity and to learn from it rather than engaging in it with the hopes that the results will be perfect.

3. Certain acts are socially inappropriate or downright anti-social, and those individuals who perform these acts are behaving out of ignorance or are just stupid. It is better to help them to change their misguided view of life or teach them the proper social behavior than to severly blame or punish them.

4. It is unfortunate that life's circumstances are often not as we would like them to be, and it would be advisable to change or control conditions so they become more satisfactory. If the changes or controls are not possible it is better to temporarily accept their existence.

5. Human unhappiness is caused by the way in which we perceive and judge external conditions, not by the external conditions themselves. People make themselves unhappy by their illogical or irrational beliefs about external events.

6. It would be better for humans to face the dangerous situation or feared object or situation and render it non-dangerous. When this is not possible one should accept the inevitable situation and cope with it the best as possible.

7. All human beings must come to grips sooner or later with the tasks and responsibilities of life. The earlier one faces and deals with the tasks of life the more experience one has with solving life's difficulties and the easier it is to accept responsibility for yourself.

8. It is much better to act and think independently for only you are responsible for what you do in life. Essentially the more dependent upon others you are the more dependent you become.

9. One can learn from past experiences, while not being overly attached to or prejudiced by them.

10. It is much better to help another person deal with his problems. It serves no practical purposes to become upset yourself for these are not your problems and what good does becoming upset or disturbed do for the person with problems.

11. There is no such thing as only one right and perfect solution to any problem. There are any number of possible solutions, one may be better than another under given circumstances. It is better to try a number of possible solutions and see which one works best.

12. Humans tend to be happiest when they are virtually absorbed in creative pursuits, or when they are devoting themselves to people or projects outside themselves.

Emotion then does not appear to exist in its own right, as a special and almost mystical entity. Emotions and thinking are intimately interrelated and form one process and are more accurately described as feeling-thoughts.

Human emoting has 3 major origins or pathways and these are:

Feelings 1. Through sensor-motor pathways

Feelings 2. Through biophysical stimulation medicated through the tissues of the central and autonomic nervous systems.

Emotions 3. Through the cognitive processes.

The major focus of Rational-Emotive Therapy is upon the second class of emotive reactions, those of sustained emotions. Sustained emotions are produced by our attitudes and belief about life which are linguistically inculcated within us. Thinking and emoting accompany each other in a tautological manner. This is because human beings are reared in social organizations in which language is the main way in which they communicate their state of physical and emotional well being with themselves and others. This is especially true when we experience sustained emotion. Many of our emotions take the form of self-talk or internalized sentences of an evaluative nature, (We make a cognitive appraisal or judgement). This self-talk frequently becomes our emotions.

A great deal of what we call emotions are essentially an appraisal or cognitive sentiment that is strongly slanted or biased by our previous perceptions and experiences that are highly personalized and are often accompanied by gross psychophysiological body reactions, and that

are likely to induce us into taking some type of action in either a positive or negative direction. The intensity and direction that we take is determined by the kind of self-talk we employ. That is, we usually employ either logical or illogical self-talk. The self-talk is based upon the kinds of assumptions or beliefs we have about our conditions in the world and how the world should behave in relation to us.

Emotional Disturbances

Emotional disturbances are created and maintained as the result of false or illogical beliefs about an individual's status in life or about the individuals relationship with the external social world. These illogical beliefs are developed through early conditioning in life, introjected attitudes and beliefs (verbal indoctrination) and by autosuggestion.

People with emotional dysfunctions create and maintain their disturbance by autosuggestion. They reindoctrinate themselves in their false assumptions about their lack of self-worth by their illogical self-talk. They linguistically hood-wink themselves by developing defined fears and continuation of their illogical beliefs about life.

The defined fears and sentiments are linguistically abstracted rules about what is the proper way of behaving in society or "real social truth" which is based upon false assumptions, which are not connected to physical or social reality.

The emotionally disturbed individual creates his dysfunctional emotional responses by his illogical attitudes about the human condition through his self-talk and defined needs. The disturbed individual's self-talking abilities permit him to forget his real needs, or necessities for human survival; these are invariably of a physical or sensory nature. They consist of such demands as the need for sufficient food, fluids, shelter, health, and freedom from physical pain.

Self-talking permits the emotionally disturbed person to illegitimately translate his psychological desires like the desire for love, approval, success, and leisure into definitional needs. Then once the disturbed individual has defined his desires as his needs, and accepted the false definitions of his parents or peer group; his self-talking abilities beautifully enable him to continue to define his desires in this nonsensical manner even though there is no supporting evidence to back these definitions.

Sustained negative emotions are invaribly the result of stupidity, ignorance, or disturbances (biophysical imbalances in the brain or somatic tissues). Rarely are a persons sustained negative emotions brought about by an external event. Emotional disturbances, for the most part, generally arise from the individuals conscious for unconscious self-talk about some antecedent event. Thus, it is the false belief or personalized biase about the antecedent event or object which creates and maintains the sustained emotional disturbance.

Leader's Summary on Assertive Training for Young People #3

Pam is upset because a popular girl in her class teases her and intimidates her into giving up candy and treats that Pam wants for herself. Curt is painfully shy, unable even to ask his teacher questions about assignments or tests. Fred appears to be a meek and quiet child, but occasionally he will fly into a rage over a seemingly small incident, such as a classmate accidentally knocking over a book on his desk. Jill is afraid to give book reports in front of her class because she worries that other students will laugh at her. As a result, she "forgets" to do her reports.

What do these children have in common? All have trouble constructively confronting other people. All have difficulty expressing what they need or want in an appropriate manner and, as a result, feel helpless or frustrated in many situations.

Assertiveness training seemed to be a potentially effective strategy for meeting the needs of these children. Although, to my knowledge, assertiveness training had not previously been adapted for use with elementary or junior high school children, assertive-training programs have produced impressive positive behavior changes in adults. Assertive training has helped men and women obtain more satisfaction in their personal and professional lives (Jakubowski in press a). Marriage partners have been trained to use assertion techniques to improve communication and help solve problems (Fensterheim 1972). Assertiveness training has helped individuals learn to express anger appropriately (Rimm et al. 1974), modify self-destructive passive or submissive behavior (Katz 1971), refuse unreasonable requests (McFall & Twentyman 1973), take initiative, and express feelings and desires clearly and directly (Rathus 1973).

Whether young people, particularly those as young as fifth and sixth graders, could understand the vocabulary, concepts, and value system of assertive training remained to be seen. Whether young people would be able to practice assertive rather than aggressive behavior after exposure to an assertive-training program was another important issue. These were empirical questions that could only be resolved by teaching assertive-training techniques to children.

This article will first describe the rationale, specific objectives, and sessions of a course in assertive training developed for young people from approximately 11 to 14 years of age. The responses of fifth- and sixth-grade students to the program, cautions for potential leaders of assertive training, and uses for counselors will then be summarized.

RATIONALE

According to Jakubowski-Spector, assertive behavior is interpersonal behavior "in which a person stands up for her legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of another are not violated" (1973, p. 2). It is distinguished both from nonassertive behavior, in which people ignore their rights or allow others to violate their rights, and from aggressive behavior, in which people fulfill their own needs in a way that is destructive to others. When people act assertively, they state what they want clearly and unambiguously but can also have empathy for others.

Certain features of assertive training make it attractive as a potential counseling method for young people. Its emphasis on skills rather than psychodynamic analysis; its potential applicability to many, not just problem, students; and its similarity to values and decision-making programs place assertive training within a deliberate psychological education framework (Mosher & Sprinthall 1971) that would be appropriate and useful for elementary school students.

Skills taught in assertive training have particular relevance for students approaching adolescence. At this stage of development, peer influence waxes as adult influence and authority wane. Children with low self-esteem may easily be led by peers to act against their consciences. Threats of "I won't be your friend if you don't" and "C'mon, don't be a sissy" are powerful factors in the behavior of such children. Assertive training could help children formulate appropriate responses to such pressure tactics by peers. Assertive training might also help young people learn to confront adults, especially teachers and parents, in ways that are neither hostile nor submissive. Skills in assertion might be useful in promoting constructive dialogues between young people and adults.

Assertive training also agrees with the democratic values taught to intermediate and junior high school children. It provides both a frame of reference for understanding democratic values on an interpersonal level and a set of skills that enables individuals to act on these values. The potential usefulness of assertive training for education in democratic living assumes special importance in the light of disturbing research studies that show that the great majority of adult males do nothing to defend themselves when significant rights are violated (Moriarty 1975) or can easily be persuaded to violate the rights of others (Milgram 1963).

Some proponents of assertive training (Alberti & Emmons 1974) have suggested that assertive training promotes positive self-concepts among adult participants. It seemed reasonable to believe that a well-constructed program in assertive training might have positive effects on the self-concepts of children in elementary and junior high school.

STEPS

The specific objectives of the curriculum were adapted from Jakubowski-Spector's An Introduction to Assertive Training Procedures for Women (1973). These objectives are:

1. For students to be able to discriminate between nonassertive, aggressive, and assertive behavior;
2. For students to become aware of their rights in a variety of interpersonal situations relevant to young people;
3. For students to be able to identify the emotional blocks they use to prevent them from acting assertively;
4. For students to learn skills that enable them to reduce these blocks;
5. For students to develop assertive behaviors through behavior rehearsal (a special form of role playing).

PREPARING FOR THE SESSIONS

The training materials, which presently include a leader's manual and student handouts, were prepared on the assumption that a counselor or teacher would be able to meet with students for approximately 30 minutes twice a week for 5 weeks: a total of 10 sessions. I held individual or group interviews with potential group members before the training. At this time I explained the purpose of the group (to help people learn to get what they want in ways that won't hurt them or others) and helped interested individuals focus on appropriate goals. It would also be helpful for the leader to contact parents of group members to explain the purpose of the group and describe skills that students will be learning.

CONTENT OF SESSIONS

The assertive-training curriculum for young people is tentatively titled "You have rights! Others have rights!" In devising the materials, I selected vocabulary and techniques that would be clear and interesting to children. To supplement the cumbersome terms "nonassertive" and "aggressive," I introduced the words "doormat" and "bully." Many activities were presented in cartoon or game form.

What follows is a description of topics and activities for the 10 sessions as they were actually taught to fifth- and sixth-grade boys and girls. The structure of the sessions should by no means be considered the final form. In particular, the concept of rights must be further developed. I hope, however, that counselors may find the session summaries valuable in developing their own assertive-training programs.

Session 1

Students made a list of various ways that people get what they want: asking, hinting, temper tantrums, flirting, and so on. Three cartoon stick figures--one assertive, one a bully, and one a doormat--were then introduced to help students learn to distinguish between assertive, aggressive, and non-assertive behavior. Each method of getting what one wanted listed earlier was then classified according to which cartoon figure would be most likely to use it.

Session 2

Students shared times in their own lives when they had been assertive, aggressive, or nonassertive and took turns stating situations in which they would like to have been or to be more assertive. Students began practicing assertive behavior in role-playing situations of their choice.

Section 3

In this session students learned that "Your body can tell you if you are being assertive." Each student was asked to react nonassertively to the leader's request, "Can I borrow your bike?" Students discussed their posture, feelings, tone of voice, and degree of eye contact. Students then responded aggressively to the same request, and a similar discussion followed. Finally, each student reacted assertively to the leader's request by saying "No" in a firm voice and maintaining eye contact. Students were given the opportunity to practice the assertive response until they felt comfortable with it. They then discussed body and feeling responses to behaving assertively.

Sessions 4,5,6

These three sessions were designed to help students explore blocks to assertive behavior and ways of reducing these blocks. In Session 4, children filled in cartoon balloons with "scarifying thoughts" that keep them from being assertive. Typical responses for the situation in which a friend asked for a student's ice cream were: "She won't be my friend if I don't give it to her" and "She'll beat me up if I don't give it to her." The author then used techniques of questioning similar to those used in rational-emotive therapy to help students evaluate to what extent their fears were realistic (Ellis 1975).

In the next session, students practiced replacing their "scarifying thoughts" with "encouraging thoughts." In the situation mentioned in Session 4, students were able to think of such encouraging thoughts as "She may be mad today, but she'll forget about it tomorrow." Students practiced finding "encouraging thoughts" in other situations in which they wanted to be assertive. The situations were then acted.

In Session 6, students read and discussed a story that allowed them to explore the influence of traditional male and female upbringing on assertive behavior.

Session 7

In past sessions assertive behavior was seen mainly as a method of expressing wants or setting limits on others. In this session assertion was redefined to include expressing positive feelings about another person. Students then practiced asserting positive feelings through a "strengths bombardment." Each student in turn was "bombarded" with positive feedback and required to write down or state orally the strength others had mentioned.

Session 8

Students learned to distinguish between direct and indirect communication and to practice direct communication. For example, students were given a situation in which a hat blocked a student's view of a movie and the student said loudly, "Honestly, some people are so inconsiderate." Students labeled this statement indirect and replaced it with the more appropriate request, "Could you please take off you hat? I can't see."

Session 9

The theme of this session was "An assertive person shows understanding for others." Students practiced guessing the feelings of a person they were confronting and making a workable compromise that preserved everyone's integrity. One situation acted out in this session consisted of a conflict between a person who wanted to watch horror movies and another person who got nightmares from them. Through the role playing, students found an activity acceptable to both.

Session 10

Students evaluated their progress, pointed out positive changes in others, and gave me feedback on the training materials.

STUDENT RESPONSES AND BEHAVIOR CHANGES

I used the assertive-training materials with three small groups of four students each: a group of fifth-grade girls, a group of sixth-grade boys, and a sixth-grade group of two boys and two girls. All the groups were chosen through a combination of self-referral, teacher referral, and counselor invitation.

No formal kinds of evaluation procedures were used to assess the effects of the training procedures on students in the groups. To what extent, if any, the assertive-training materials for young people increase assertive behaviors remains an empirical question that must still be answered. Despite my initial misgivings, I did observe that almost all students seemed to grasp the concepts and value system of assertive

training, and most were able to apply the terms assertive, aggressive, and nonaggressive correctly by the end of the group. All students shared positive feelings about the groups, especially students in the single-sex groups, who expressed their enthusiasm often in brief critiques at the end of each session and in the final session.

In general, self-reports and teacher and counselor observations suggest that assertive training led to positive behavior changes in a number of participants.

Sixth-Grade Boys Group

This group was composed of two target students considered aggressive by their teacher and themselves and two teacher-chosen models. The two aggressive boys behaved well most of the time but were subject to extreme outbursts of temper, often over small incidents. At the end of the training, Fred reported that he was now able to talk things over with someone rather than get angry. His teacher's perceptions supported Fred's self-evaluation. The teacher reported that Fred's temper outbursts in the classroom had virtually ceased.

Dan, the other target student, felt that he still lost his temper too much but felt freer to talk with friends about things that bothered him. Dan's teacher noticed no behavior changes in Dan but had discovered that an impending divorce in Dan's family may have been contributing to his problems. Dan's case serves to remind us that aggression may be a symptom of problems that cannot always be dealt with in assertive-training groups. Correct diagnosis of a student's problem is essential (see Cautions).

Fifth-Grade Girls Group

All the girls in this group chose to participate because they saw themselves as nonaggressive, often victims of the whims of others with anecdotes about successful assertive behavior recently attempted. At the end of the training, all reported an increased ability to say "No" to unreasonable requests. The leader noticed that they were able to use firm voices and to maintain eye contact in role playing at the end of the training. This group was the most enthusiastic of all groups; several girls brought in self-created cartoon situations for other group members to fill in, one girl created a board game on assertion, and the group organized a party for the final session.

Mixed-Sex Sixth-Grade Group

It is interesting that this group seemed to make the least progress of all the groups. Participants often seemed reluctant to share their feelings and experiences in front of others. The group process was punctuated by giggles or embarrassed silences. Although all participants stated that they enjoyed the group and found it valuable, the group members did not often report successful instances of assertive behavior to the group. It may be that I should have screened applicants to this group more carefully, or perhaps it is generally more difficult to teach assertive behavior in mixed groups (Jakubowski in press b).

CAUTIONS

Alberti and Emmons (1974) warn that leaders of assertive-training groups must be able to recognize when an individual might benefit from assertive training and when other types of intervention might be more appropriate. Leaders should have training in group dynamics, behavior therapy, and in the use of such important components of the assertive-training process as behavior rehearsal. Counselors who would like to use assertive training in their schools should assess their own ability to be assertive in interpersonal relations. Courses in assertive training might help counselors improve their own skills as well as familiarize them with the training procedures. Counselors are referred to Lange and Jakubowski (1976) for a thorough discussion of these procedures.

SUMMARY

The tentative results from the groups described in this article indicate that assertive training, if presented by an experienced leader, might help intermediate and junior high school students deal with a variety of problems related to lack of assertion skills, shyness, uncontrollable temper, lack of initiative, boredom, difficulty with teasing, difficulty in saying "No" - counselors can asses to what extent these problems are related to poor assertion skills and use assertive training in individual counseling or in groups to deal with these problems. Counselors might also consider using assertive training to help students come to terms with changing sex roles and to aid students in developing decision-making skills.

In summary, a potentially valuable task for counselors would be to examine and research assertive training as a method for helping young people within a preventive framework.

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Leader's Summary on Relaxation Training for Children #4

Children experience some degree of tension at one time or another in the elementary grades. This tension can range from an "uptight" feeling right before an unprepared for oral book report to a generalized tension and worry throughout the day. Some children experience discomfort during specific subject matter periods, others when beginning a new task, while others become upset after a correction from the teacher. Pressure to succeed, to always be right, to be liked, to have approval, or to cope with family problems can produce tension in a child.

Relaxation exercises designed especially for children can help them to become aware of the feelings of body tension and provide skills to reduce it. Children can be taught how to reduce their muscle tension, and this seems to reduce anxiety as well. There was one boy whose arms and legs seemed like perpetual motion machines, yet he showed no awareness of this manifest tension. He mentioned that his parents were considering "putting me on some kind of pills to help me pay attention better." Though he denied any feelings of tension, he agreed to try a few relaxation exercises. He worked hard on the exercises but said he didn't feel any different afterward. Five minutes later his puzzled expression became a grin as he said, "It worked!"

Relaxation training can take place during individual or group counseling sessions, in physical education classes, or in a regular classroom setting. Once children develop the skills, they can relax without instructions from a trainer and thereby implement a higher degree of self-control. If successful mastery of academic tasks, then perhaps a case could be made for improved self-concept as well.

In training children to relax various muscle groups, it is not necessary that they be able to identify and locate them. The use of the child's fantasy can be incorporated into the instructions in such a manner that the appropriate muscle groups will automatically be used. Some precedent for the use of fantasy in a similar context was set by Lazarus and Abramovitz (1962). The use of fantasy also serves to attract and maintain a child's interest. One child told his counselor that the exercises stopped the butterflies in his stomach. The butterfly imagery expressed a real feeling for him; it has been replaced by the feelings connoted by a laxy cat.

It has been noted that although children will agree that they want

to learn how to relax, they don't want to practice their newly acquired skills under the watchful eyes of their classmates. Fortunately, several muscle groups can be relaxed without much gross motor activity, and practice can go unnoticed. It pleases some children to perform these exercises in class and relax themselves without drawing the attention of those around them. It seemed important to one little girl that the exercises be "our secret" that "we won't tell the other kids." The effects of this type of training can extend beyond the classroom. A fourth-grade boy said that he used the exercises to help him get to sleep at night.

Below is a relaxation script designed for and used successfully with children in the intermediate grades. This script is similar in design to those used with adults (Carkhuff 1969; Lazarus 1971) but is intended to be more appealing to children. It is likely that the script is equally appropriate for children in the primary grades. Counselors are encouraged to experiment with it and to revise and extend it to include specific interests of children and incorporate other muscle groups. Eight muscle groups are included here. Other exercises can be developed to work with the upper thighs, upper arms, and different muscles around the face and neck as well as the flexing muscles in the feet and extending muscles in the hands.

In working with this script it is recommended that no more than fifteen minutes be devoted to the exercises at any one time. In the initial training sessions the children are learning a new concept and new material. Two or three short sessions per week will help to establish these new behaviors. Aside from theoretical considerations, it is just too hard for some children to keep their eyes closed for more than fifteen minutes. Later sessions serve more to maintain the skills and provide a founda for work in other areas. This type session can follow a weekly pa with ten or fifteen minutes devoted to relaxation, and the remainder fo che time can be spent on other things.

It should be noted that many of the instructions should be repeated many more times than are indicated in the script and that such repetitions have been intentionally deleted. Each child or group of children is unique. Timing and pacing must follow the individual pattern created in the specific situation. One word of caution requires consideration: Children tend to "get into" this type of experience as much or more than adults, and they are likely to be a bit disoriented if the session ends abruptly. Preparing children to leave the relaxed state is just as important as proper introduction and timing.

A Relaxation Training Script

Introduction

Today we're going to do some special kinds of exercises called "relaxation exercises." These exercises help you learn how to relax when you're feeling uptight and help you get rid of those butterflies-in-your-stomach kinds of feelings. They're also kind of neat, because you can do some of them in the classroom without anybody noticing.

In order for you to get the best feelings from these exercises, there are some rules you must follow. First, you must do exactly what I say, even if it seems kind of silly. Second, you must try hard to do what I say. Third, you must pay attention to your body. Throughout these exercises, pay attention to how your muscles feel when they are tight and when they are loose and relaxed. And, fourth, you must practice. The more you practice, the more relaxed you can get. Does anyone have any questions?

Are you ready to begin? Okay. First, get as comfortable as you can in your chair. Sit back, get both feet on the floor, and just let your arms hang loose. That's fine. Now close your eyes and don't open them until I say to. Remember to follow my instructions very carefully, try hard, and pay attention to your body. Here we go.

Hands and Arms

Pretend you have a whole lemon in your left hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon. Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed. Take another lemon and squeeze it. Try to squeeze this one harder than you did the first one. That's right. Real hard. Now drop your lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Once again, take a lemon in your left hand and squeeze all the juice out. Don't leave a single drop. Squeeze hard. Good. Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand. (Repeat the process for the right hand and arm.)

Arms and Shoulders

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, kittens, let's stretch again. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them over your head. Pull them back, way back. Pull hard. Now let them drop quickly. Good. Notice how your shoulders feel more relaxed. This time let's have a great big

stretch. Try to touch the ceiling. Stretch your arms way out in front of you. Raise them way up high over your head. Push them way, way back. Notice the tension and pull in your arms and shoulders. Hold tight, now. Great. Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Shoulder and Neck

Now pretend you are a turtle. You're sitting out on a rock by a nice, peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun. It feels nice and warm and safe here. Oh-oh! You sense danger. Pull your head into your house. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. It isn't easy to be a turtle in a shell. The danger is past now. You can come out into the warm sunshine, and, once again, you can relax and feel the warm sunshine. Watch out now! More danger. Hurry, pull your head back into your house and hold it tight. You have to be closed in tight to protect yourself. Okay, you can relax now. Bring your head out and let your shoulders relax. Notice how much better it feels to be relaxed than to be all tight. One more time, now. Danger! Pull your head in. Push your shoulders way up to your ears and hold tight. Don't let even a tiny piece of your head show outside your shell. Hold it. Feel the tenseness in your neck and shoulders. Okay. You can come out now. It's safe again. Relax and feel comfortable in your safety. There's no more danger. Nothing to worry about. Nothing to be afraid of. You feel good.

Jaw

You have a giant jawbreaker bubble gum in your mouth. It's very hard to chew. Bite down on it. Hard! Let your neck muscles help you. Now relax. Just let your jaw hang loose. Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop. Okay, let's tackle that jawbreaker again now. Bite down. Hard! Try to squeeze it out between your teeth. That's good. You're really tearing that gum up. Now relax again. Just let your jaw drop off your face. It feels so good just to let go and not have to fight that bubble gum. Okay, one more time. We're really going to tear it up this time. Bite down. Hard as you can. Harder. Oh, you're really working hard. Good. Now relax. Try to relax your whole body. You've beaten the bubble gum. Let yourself go as loose as you can.

Face and Nose

Here comes a pesky old fly. He has landed on your nose. Try to get him off without using your hands. That's right, wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch your nose up real hard. Good. You've chased him away. Now you can relax your nose. Ooops, here he comes back again. Right back in the middle of your nose. Wrinkle up your nose again. Shoo him off. Wrinkle it up hard. Hold it just as

tight as you can. Okay, he flew away. You can relax your face. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose that your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help you, and they get tight, too. So when you relax your nose, your whole face relaxes too, and that feels good. Oh-oh. This time that old fly has come back, but this time he's on your forehead. Make lots of wrinkles. Try to catch him between all those wrinkles. Hold it tight, now. Okay, you can let go. He's gone for good. Now you can just relax. Let your face go smooth, no wrinkles anywhere. Your face feels nice and smooth and relaxed.

Stomach

Hey! Here comes a cute baby elephant. But he's not watching where he's going. He doesn't see you lying there in the grass, and he's about to step on your stomach. Don't move. You don't have time to get out of the way. Just get ready for him. Make your stomach very hard. Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight. Hold it. It looks like he is going the other way. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. Oops, he's coming this way again. Get ready. Tighten up your stomach. Real hard. If he steps on you when your stomach is hard, it won't hurt. Make your stomach into a rock. Okay, he's moving away again. You can relax now. Kind of settle down, get comfortable, and relax. Notice the difference between a tight stomach and a relaxed one. That's how we want it to feel--nice and loose and relaxed. You won't believe this, but this time he's really coming your way and no turning around. He's headed straight for you. Tighten up. Tighten hard. Here he comes. This is really it. You've got to hold on tight. He's stepping on you. He's stepped over you. Now he's gone for good. You can relax completely. You're safe. Everything is okay, and you can feel nice and relaxed.

This time imagine that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence and the boards have splinters on them. You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through. Suck your stomach in. Try to squeeze it up against your backbone. Try to be as skinny as you can. You've got to get through. Now relax. You don't have to be skinny now. Just relax and feel your stomach being warm and loose. Okay, let's try to get through that fence now. Squeeze up your stomach. Make it touch your backbone. Get it real small and tight. Get as skinny as you can. Hold tight, now. You've got to squeeze through. You got through that skinny little fence and no splinters. You can relax now. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs. You can feel really good now. You've done fine.

Legs and Feet

Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed. Back into the mud puddle. Squish your toes down. Let your leg muscles help push your feet down. Push your feet. Hard. Try to squeeze that mud puddle dry. Okay. Come back out now. Relax your feet, relax your legs, relax your toes. It feels so good to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel kind of warm and tingly.

Conclusion

Stay as relaxed as you can. Let your whole body go limp and feel all your muscles relaxed. In a few minutes I will ask you to open your eyes, and that will be the end of this session. As you go through the day, remember how good it feels to be relaxed. Sometimes you have to make yourself tighter before you can be relaxed, just as we did in these exercises. Practice these exercises every day to get more and more relaxed. A good time to practice is at night, after you have gone to bed and the lights are out and you won't be disturbed. It will help you get to sleep. Then, when you are a really good relaxer, you can help yourself relax here at school. Just remember the elephant, or the jaw breaker, or the mud puddle, and you can do our exercises and nobody will know. Today is a good day, and you are ready to go back to class feeling very relaxed. You've worked hard in here, and it feels good to work hard. Very slowly, now, open your eyes and wiggle your muscles around a little. Very good. You've done a good job. You're going to be a super relaxer.

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PARTICIPANT WORKSHEETS

Objective: To evaluate which rights are especially important.

Activity 5 minutes

EVERY PERSON'S BILL OF RIGHTS

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read the following rights. Item 10 is an especially important right that is often neglected. Assertion offers a choice.

Then put an X by the rights that are <u>especially</u> important to you.

____ 1. The right to be treated with respect.

____ 2. The right to have and express my own feeling and opinions.

____ 3. The right to be listened to and taken seriously.

____ 4. The right to set my own priorities.

____ 5. The right to say no without feeling guilty.

____ 6. The right to ask for what I want.

____ 7. The right to get what I pay for.

____ 8. The right to ask for information from professionals.

____ 9. The right to make mistakes.

____10. The right to choose not to assert myself.

Objective: To differentiate between definitions

Activity **5 minutes**

ASSERTIVENESS RECAP

TASK DIRECTIONS

The following three terms are frequently confused, interchanged, and misinterpreted. Based on the discussion in which you have just been involved, define these terms.

Assertiveness is _____

_____.

Aggressiveness is _____

_____.

Non-assertiveness is _____

_____.

Objective: To assess individual needs for assertiveness training.

Activity: 10 minutes

AQ TEST

TASK DIRECTIONS

Complete the following "assertiveness quotient": questionnaire. Use the following scale to indicate how comfortable you are with each item:

1. I feel very comfortable
2. I feel moderately comfortable.
3. I am very uncomfortable with this.

Assertive Behaviors

*Speaking up and asking questions at a meeting. _____

*Commenting about being interrupted by a person directly to him/her at the moment he/she interrupts you. _____

*Stating your views to a female authority figure, (e.g., minister, boss, therapist, mother). _____

*Attempting to offer solutions and elaborating on them when there are members of the opposite sex present. _____

Your Body

*Entering and exiting a room where men are present. _____

*Entering and exiting a room where women are present. _____

*Speaking in front of a group. _____

*Maintaining eye contact, keeping your head upright, and leaning forward when in a personal conversation. _____

Sensuality

*Telling a prospective lover about your physical attraction to him/her before any such statement are made to you _____

*Initiating sex with your partner _____

*Expressing enjoyment of an art show or concert in spite of others' reactions _____

*Asking for affection _____

Anger

*Expressing anger directly and honestly when you feel angry _____

*Arguing with another person _____

Humor

*Telling a joke _____

*Listening to a friend tell a story about something embarrassing, but funny, that you have done _____

*Responding with humor to someone's putdown of you or of someone else _____

Children

*Disciplining your own children _____

*Disciplining others' children _____

*Explaining the facts of life to your children _____

Manipulation and Counter-Manipulation

*Telling a person when you think she/he is manipulating you _____

*Commenting to a person who has made a patronizing remark to you _____

Your Mind

*Going out with a group of friends when you are the only one without a "partner" _____

*Being especially competent, using your authority and/or power without labeling yourself as impolite, bossy, aggressive, or parental _____

*Requesting expected service when you haven't received it (e.g., in a restaurant or a store) _____

Apology

*Being expected to apologize for something and not apologizing since you feel you are right _____

*Requesting the return of borrowed items without being apologetic _____

Compliments, Criticism, and Rejection

*Receiving a compliment by saying something assertive to acknowledge that you agree with the person complimenting you _____

*Accepting a rejection _____

*Discussing another person's criticism of you openly with that person _____

*Telling someone that she/he is doing something that is bothering you _____

Saying "No"

*Refusing to get coffee for others or to take notes at a meeting _____

*Saying "no"--refusing to do a favor when you really don't feel like it _____

*Turning down a request for a meeting _____

Objective: To learn of the lose/gain aspect of the decision-making process.

Activity 5 minutes

? ? DECISIONS, DECISIONS ? ?

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read the following short essay on decisions.

In most any decision, there are aspects of losing and gaining or winning involved. Often we can stop ourselves from making a decision by waiting until we are in a win-win position. On the other hand, we can scare ourselves by predicting a lose-lose position. In either situation, the win-win or the lose-lose scare, the result is usually the same: NO DECISION, no movement. A more realistic assessment is the win-lose position.

What do you have to lose and to gain (win) from a decision to be more assertive in your life?

Objective:

Activity 10 minutes

TASK DIRECTIONS

In the group of three, discuss what can be lost from taking an assertive stance and what can be gained from assertion. Summarize individually on this page.

Lose	Gain or Win
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Objective: To learn the ABC theory on emotions

Activity **10 minutes**

TASK DIRECTIONS

Based on the discussion about feelings, think of a situation (A) where you feel (c) unassertive - scared, frustrated, angry, helpless, etc. Label the situation A and your feelings (C). Then, think about what you say to make yourself scared or frustrated or angry or helpless, etc. Write those sentences you say to yourself under B.

SITUATION **FEELING(S)**

INTERPRETATION

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Objective: To assess which irrational beliefs are used most frequently.

Activity

> **TASK DIRECTIONS**
>
> Read through the following 7 irrational beliefs that frequently are tied to assertive behaviors. Pay attention to the rational disputes to these irrational beliefs. Mark the irrational beliefs you use most frequently to stop yourself.

____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #1

If I assert myself, others will get mad at me.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #1

If I assert myself, the effects may be positive, neutral, or negative. However, since assertion involves legitimate rights, I feel that the odds are in my favor to have some positive results.

Possible applications of this are: If I assert myself people may or may not get mad at me/they may feel closer to me/like what I say or do/help me to solve the problem.

____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #2

If I assert myself and people do become angry with me, I will be devastated; it will be awful.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #2

a. Even if others do become angry and unpleasant, I am capable of handling it without falling apart.

b. If I assert myself when it is appropriate, I don't have to feel responsible for the other person's anger. It may be his problem.

____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #3

Although I prefer others to be straight forward with me, I'm afraid that if I am open with others and say "no", I will hurt them.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #3

a. If I am assertive, other people may or may not feel hurt.

b. Most people are not more fragile than I am. If I prefer to be dealt with directly, quite likely others will too.

____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #4

If my assertion hurts others, I am responsible for their feelings.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #4

a. Even if others do feel hurt by my assertive behavior, I can let them know I care for them while also being direct about what I need or want.

b. Although at times others will be taken back by my assertive behavior, most people are not so vulnerable and fragile that they will be shattered by it.

____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #5

It is wrong and selfish to turn down legitimate requests. Other people will think I'm terrible and won't like me.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #5

a. Even legitimate requests can be refused assertively.

b. It is acceptable to consider my own needs--sometimes before those of others.

c. I can't please all of the people all of the time.

_____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #6

At all costs, I must avoid making statements and asking questions that might make me look ignorant or stupid.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #6

It's all right to lack information or to make a mistake. It just shows I'm human.

_____ IRRATIONAL BELIEF #7

Assertive women are cold, castrating bitches. If I'm assertive I'll be so unpleasant that people won't like me.

RATIONAL DISPUTES TO #7

Assertive women are direct and honest, and behave appropriately. They show a genuine concern for other people's rights and feelings as well as their own. Their assertiveness enriches their relationships with others.

CONCLUSION

THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

* Am I assuming that people will <u>always</u> react negatively to my assertion? That's irrational.

* Am I focusing on the negative outcome of my assertiveness and not considering other options? That's irrational.

* Do I think I can't handle the results of my assertive behavior if they are, in fact, negative? That's irrational.

Objective: To learn 4 types of assertive styles.

Activity 5 minutes

FOUR ASSERTIVE STYLES

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read the examples of 4 types of assertion. When you are practicing assertion in the next exercise, you may refer back to this worksheet.

Emphatic Assertion

This type of assertion involves making a statement that has two parts: (a) conveying recognition of the other person's situation or feelings; (b) expressing your own thought and observations. Example: (1) "I know you are upset because of the basketball team's loss last night, but I think you should help us complete our team project. (2) "I know you are tired because you worked hard today, but I think you should help prepare supper because I am tired also."

Confrontive Assertion

This is used when the other person's words contradict his or her deeds. This type of assertion involves three parts: (a) recalling what the other person said he or she would do; (b) objectively describing what the other person actually did do: (c) expressing what you'd like to see happen or what you want. Example: When I talked to you last, you promised me a raise which I didn't receive in this month's paycheck. Because you promised it, I would really like that raise as soon as possible.

Language Assertion

This type of assertion is particularly useful for assertively expressing difficult negative feelings. It involves a four-part statement:

I feel . . . (describe your feelings)
when . . . (describe the other person's behavior on the situation)
because . (describing how the other person's behavior concretely effects you or your life)

I'd prefer . . (describing what you would like or want)

Example: I feel angry when you do not take out the garbage because then I have to take care of it. I'd prefer that you do the chores we agreed upon.

Escalating Assertion

Escalating Assertion involves starting with "minimal" assertive statement that can usually accomplish your goal with a minimum of effort and has a small possibility of getting a negative reaction from the other person. When the other person fails to respond and ignores your assertion, you gradually escalate the assertion and become increasingly firm.

Objective: To provide experience in responding assertively.

Activity

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read the list of role-playing situations that follow and choose one to role-play.

Use one of the four types of assertive styles discussed earlier: empathic, confrontive, language or escalating.

In groups of three divide up as A, B, and C.

A=actor
B=responder
C=observer

Before beginning, take time for the actor to do a "sneak preview" of his/her assertive stance. After a situation is role-played, C should give feedback on congruency, style and options. If appropriate, role-play a second time to integrate the feedback, and remember to do another "sneak preview."

Switch roles when A is finished

B=actor
C=responder
A=observer

After feedback and second role-play for B switch roles.

C=actor
A=responder
B=observer

Behavior

* As you leave a store after purchasing an item, you find you have been overcharged 75¢. Person A--customer; Person B--salesperson unwilling to admit mistake.

* In an in-service training workshop, the leader is discussing aggressive behavior in students, but fails to define what she means by aggression. Person A--workshop participant who asks for clarification; Person B--workshop leader.

Mind

* You have been seated and have waited for 10 minutes for the menu in a somewhat crowded restaurant. You are hungry and on a tight schedule. Person A -- hungry diner; Person B -- harried and defensive waiter/waitress.

Apology

* Your good friend borrowed a favorite tool and has had it for quite awhile. You want your tool (don't be apologetic). Person A--wants tool back; Person B--good friend who borrows without returning.

Criticism

* You have made an error in your semester's attendance report which the department head catches and sarcastically criticized you for. Person A--offended teacher; Person B--unfair department head.

Saying "No"

* You have weekend plans that have been made for months but hear from your principal on Thursday that he wants you to work preregistration this Friday night and Saturday. Person A--teacher who intends to keep weekend plans; Person B--principal who needs weekend worker.

Manipulation

* A colleague begs you in a whiny voice to introduce the speaker at the next professional meeting because he/she gets "so nervous." Let the person know you feel he/she is trying to manipulate you. Person A--person who feels manipulated; Person B--person begging in a whiny voice.

Sensuality

* You have had a particularly rough day at school and want some affection and physical closeness with your partner. Person A--person who had a rough day; Person B--partner.

Anger

* Your husband/wife was supposed to be home for dinner by 6:00 but returns after 10:00 saying he/she had to work late. Person A is the displaced, assertive wife/husband. Person B is the indignant husband/wife.

Humor

* At a party, your friend makes a put down comment about your occasional tardiness to work--"He/She expects everyone but him/herself to be on time." Respond with humor. Person A --person who is occasionally late; Person B--person with the put down.

Children

* You are visiting with your neighbor in the kitchen while his/her children are jumping and cavorting recklessly on your brand new sofa. Your neighbor seems unconcerned, but you ARE! Person A--owner of the new sofa; Person B--unconcerned neighbor.

Objective: To provide an overview checklist of the steps in Assertion.

Activity

STEPS TO ASSERTION: A CHECKLIST

TASK DIRECTIONS

The following is a personal checklist for systematically approaching assertion.

1. Clarifying the situation and focus on the issue. What is my goal? What exactly do I want to accomplish?
2. How will assertive behavior on my part help me accomplish my goal?
3. What would I usually do to avoid asserting myself in this situation?
4. Why would I want to give that up and assert myself instead?
5. How might I be stopping myself from asserting myself?
   a. Am I holding on to irrational beliefs? If so, what are they?
   b. How will I replace these irrational beliefs with rational ones?
   c. What are my rights in this situation? (State them clearly)
6. Am I anxious about asserting myself? What techniques can I use to reduce my anxiety?
7. Have I done my homework? Do I have the information I need to go ahead and act?
8. Will I:
   a. Let the other person know I hear and understand him/her?
   b. Let the other person know how I feel?
   c. Tell him/her what I want?

Objective: To assess attitudes toward children's rights.

Activity

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS?

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read the Bill of Rights again. Do these rights fit for children in your opinion?

Put an X for these you feel are appropriate for children with consideration of age and maturity as well as time for training.
0 for those you feel are inappropriate
? for those you are unsure of.

____ 1. The right to be treated with respect.

____ 2. The right to have and express their own feelings and opinions.

____ 3. The right to be listened to and taken seriously.

____ 4. The right to set their own priorities.

____ 5. The right to say no without feeling guilty.

____ 6. The right to ask for what they want.

____ 7. The right to get what they pay for.

____ 8. The right to ask for information from professionals.

____ 9. The right to make mistakes.

____10. The right to choose not to assert themselves.

Objective: To assess how assertive children might be a positive benefit to self and parents.

Activity:

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME AND FOR PARENTS

TASK DIRECTIONS

Based on your private point of view and previous discussion, list the "goodies" you might derive from working with assertive children.

In small groups, share what could be in it for you. Brainstorm possible benefits for parents and list them.

Possible "goodies" for me.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Possible benefits to parents.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Objectives: To summarize the main points of assertiveness training with children.

Activity:

SUMMARY OF ASSERTION STEPS WITH CHILDREN

TASK DIRECTIONS
Summarize the steps in assertion training for children.

1. _____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

4. _____

_____

_____

5. _____

_____

_____

Objective: To summarize the main parts of a guided imagery.

Activity

SUMMARY OF STEPS IN GUIDED IMAGERY

TASK DIRECTIONS
Summarize the steps in a guided imagery.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Objective: To brainstorm themes for guided imagery formats.

Activity:

GUIDED IMAGERY THEMES

TASK DIRECTIONS

In small groups, brainstorm appropriate guided imagery themes for the elementary school setting.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Objective: To write a guided imagery experience

Activity: 30 minutes

GUIDED IMAGERY

TASK DIRECTIONS

Now that you have participated in a guided imagery experience and have learned the steps involved, this is a practice time for you to create your own guided imagery format. After you have written yours, you will have the opportunity to guide another person through. You will also have the experience of being guided through theirs.

Objective: To summarize the main points in teaching relaxation.

Activity:

SUMMARY OF STEPS IN RELAXATION

TASK DIRECTIONS
Summarize the steps in teaching relaxation.

Objective: To create a relaxation session format and try it out.

Activity

TASK DIRECTIONS

Now that you have participated in some relaxation training techniques and have learned the steps involved, this is a practice time for you to write out a relation training session. You will have an opportunity to try your format out with a partner. You will also have the experience of going through their format.

Be sure to give each other feedback about the experience.

PARTICIPANT SUMMARIES

Assertive Training for Young People

TASK DIRECTIONS

Following is an article that gives the steps involved in assertiveness training for youngsters, an overview of a ten-week format and additional background information. Read it at your own leisure outside the workshop.

Pam is upset because a popular girl in her class teases her and intimidates her into giving up candy and treats that Pam wants for herself. Curt is painfully shy, unable even to ask his teacher questions about assignments or tests. Fred appears to be a meek and quiet child, but occasionally he will fly into a rage over a seemingly small incident, such as a classmate accidentally knocking over a book on his desk. Jill is afraid to give book reports in front of her class because she worries that other students will laugh at her. As a result, she "forgets" to do her reports.

What do these children have in common? All have trouble constructively confronting other people. All have difficulty expressing what they need or want in an appropriate manner and, as a result, feel helpless or frustrated in many situations.

Assertiveness training seemed to be a potentially effective strategy for meeting the needs of these children. Although, to my knowledge, assertiveness training had not previously been adapted for use with elementary or junior high school children, assertive-training programs have produced impressive positive behavior changes in adults. Assertive training has helped men and women obtain more satisfaction in their personal and professional lives (Jakubowski in press a). Marriage partners have been trained to use assertion techniques to improve communication and help solve problems (Fensterheim 1972). Assertiveness training has helped individuals learn to express anger appropriately (Rimm et al. 1974), modify self-destructive passive or submissive behavior (Katz 1971), refuse unreasonable requests (McFall & Twentyman 1973), take initiative, and express feelings and desires clearly and directly (Rathus 1973).

Whether young people, particularly those as young as fifth and sixth graders, could understand the vocabulary, concepts, and value system of assertive training remained to be seen. Whether young people would be able to practice assertive rather than aggressive behavior after exposure to an assertive-training program was another important issue. These were empirical questions that could only be resolved by teaching assertive-training techniques to children.

This article will first describe the rationale, specific objectives, and sessions of a course in assertive training developed for young people from approximately 11 to 14 years of age. The responses of fifth- and sixth-grade students to the program, cautions for potential leaders of assertive training, and uses for counselors will then be summarized.

RATIONALE

According to Jakubowski-Spector, assertive behavior is interpersonal behavior "in which a person stands up for her legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of another are not violated" (1973, p. 2). It is distinguished both from nonassertive behavior, in which people ignore their rights or allow others to violate their rights, and from aggressive behavior, in which people fulfill their own needs in a way that is destructive to others. When people act assertively, they state what they want clearly and unambiguously but can also have empathy for others.

Certain features of assertive training make it attractive as a potential counseling method for young people. Its emphasis on skills rather than psychodynamic analysis; its potential applicability to many, not just problem, students; and its similarity to values and decision-making programs place assertive training within a deliberate psychological education framework (Mosher & Sprinthall 1971) that would be appropriate and useful for elementary school students.

Skills taught in assertive training have particular relevance for students approaching adolescence. At this stage of development, peer influence waxes as adult influence and authority wane. Children with low self-esteem may easily be led by peers to act against their consciences. Threats of "I won't be your friend if you don't" and "C'mon, don't be a sissy" are powerful factors in the behavior of such children. Assertive training could help children formulate appropriate responses to such pressure tactics by peers. Assertive training might also help young people learn to confront adults, especially teachers and parents, in ways that are neither hostile nor submissive. Skills in assertion might be useful in promoting constructive dialogues between young people and adults.

Assertive training also agrees with the democratic values taught to intermediate and junior high school children. It provides both a frame of reference for understanding democratic values on an interpersonal level and a set of skills that enables individuals to act on these values. The potential usefulness of assertive training for education in democratic living assumes special importance in the light of disturbing research studies that show that the great majority of adult males do nothing to defend themselves when significant rights are violated (Moriarty 1975) or can easily be persuaded to violate the rights of others (Milgram 1963).

Some proponents of assertive training (Alberti & Emmons 1974) have suggested that assertive training promotes positive self-concepts among adult participants. It seemed reasonable to believe that a well-constructed program in assertive training might have positive effects on the self-concepts of children in elementary and junior high school.

STEPS

The specific objectives of the curriculum were adapted from Jakubowski-Spector's An Introduction to Assertive Training Procedures for Women (1973). These objectives are

1. For students to be able to discriminate between nonassertive, aggressive, and assertive behavior;
2. For students to become aware of their rights in a variety of interpersonal situations relevant to young people;
3. For students to be able to identify the emotional blocks they use to prevent them from acting assertively;
4. For students to learn skills that enable them to reduce these blocks;
5. For students to develop assertive behaviors through behavior rehearsal (a special form of role playing).

PREPARING FOR THE SESSIONS

The training materials, which presently include a leader's manual and student handouts, were prepared on the assumption that a counselor or teacher would be able to meet with students for approximately 30 minutes twice a week for 5 weeks: a total of 10 sessions. I held individual or group interviews with potential group members before the training. At this time I explained the purpose of the group (to help people learn to get what they want in ways that won't hurt them or others) and helped interested individuals focus on appropriate goals. It would also be helpful for the leader to contact parents of group members to explain the purpose of the group and describe skills that students will be learning.

CONTENT OF SESSIONS

The assertive-training curriculum for young people is tentatively titled "You have rights! Others have rights!" In devising the materials, I selected vocabulary and techniques that would be clear and interesting to children. To supplement the cumbersome terms "nonassertive" and "aggressive," I introduced the words "doormat" and "bully." Many activities were presented in cartoon or game form.

What follows is a description of topics and activities for the 10 sessions as they were actually taught to fifth- and sixth-grade boys and girls. The structure of the sessions should by no means be considered the final form. In particular, the concept of rights must be further developed. I hope, however, that counselors may find the session summaries valuable in developing their own assertive-training programs.

Session 1

Students made a list of various ways that people get what they want: asking, hinting, temper tantrums, flirting, and so on. Three cartoon stick figures--one assertive, one a bully, and one a doormat--were then introduced to help students learn to distinguish between assertive, aggressive, and non-assertive behavior. Each method of getting what one wanted listed earlier was then classified according to which cartoon figure would be most likely to use it.

Session 2

Students shared times in their own lives when they had been assertive, aggressive, or nonassertive and took turns stating situations in which they would like to have been or to be more assertive. Students began practicing assertive behavior in role-playing situations of their choice.

Section 3

In this session students learned that "Your body can tell you if you are being assertive." Each student was asked to react nonassertively to the leader's request, "Can I borrow your bike?" Students discussed their posture, feelings, tone of voice, and degree of eye contact. Students then responded aggressively to the same request, and a similar discussion followed. Finally, each student reacted assertively to the leader's request by saying "No" in a firm voice and maintaining eye contact. Students were given the opportunity to practice the assertive response until they felt comfortable with it. They then discussed body and feeling responses to behaving assertively.

Sessions 4,5,6

These three sessions were designed to help students explore blocks to assertive behavior and ways of reducing these blocks. In Session 4, children filled in cartoon balloons with "scarifying thoughts" that keep them from being assertive. Typical responses for the situation in which a friend asked for a student's ice cream were: "She won't be my friend if I don't give it to her" and "She'll beat me up if I don't give it to her." The author then used techniques of questioning similar to those used in rational-emotive therapy to help students evaluate to what extent their fears were realistic (Ellis 1975).

In the next session, students practiced replacing their "scarifying thoughts" with "encouraging thoughts." In the situation mentioned in Session 4, students were able to think of such encouraging thoughts as "She may be mad today, but she'll forget about it tomorrow." Students practiced finding "encouraging thoughts" in other situations in which they wanted to be assertive. The situations were then acted.

In Session 6, students read and discussed a story that allowed them to explore the influence of traditional male and female upbringing on assertive behavior.

Session 7

In past sessions assertive behavior was seen mainly as a method of expressing wants or setting limits on others. In this session assertion was redefined to include expressing positive feelings about another person. Students then practiced asserting positive feelings through a "strengths bombardment." Each student in turn was "bombarded" with positive feedback and required to write down or state orally the strength others had mentioned.

Session 8

Students learned to distinguish between direct and indirect communication and to practice direct communication. For example, students were given a situation in which a hat blocked a student's view of a movie and the student said loudly, "Honestly, some people are so inconsiderate." Students labeled this statement indirect and replaced it with the more appropriate request, "Could you please take off you hat? I can't see."

Session 9

The theme of this session was "An assertive person shows understanding for others." Students practiced guessing the feelings of a person they were confronting and making a workable compromise that preserved everyone's integrity. One situation acted out in this session consisted of a conflict between a person who wanted to watch horror movies and another person who got nightmares from them. Through the role playing, students found an activity acceptable to both.

Session 10

Students evaluated their progress, pointed out positive changes in others, and gave me feedback on the training materials.

STUDENT RESPONSES AND BEHAVIOR CHANGES

I used the assertive-training materials with three small groups of four students each: a group of fifth-grade girls, a group of sixth-grade boys, and a sixth-grade group of two boys and two girls. All the groups were chosen through a combination of self-referral, teacher referral, and counselor invitation.

No formal kinds of evaluation procedures were used to assess the effects of the training procedures on students in the groups. To what extent, if any, the assertive-training materials for young people increase assertive behaviors remains an empirical question that must still be answered. Despite my initial misgivings, I did observe that almost all students seemed to grasp the concepts and value system of assertive training, and most were able to apply the terms assertive, aggressive, and nonaggressive correctly by the end of the group. All students shared positive feelings about the groups, especially students in the single-sex groups, who expressed their enthusiasm often in brief critiques at the end of each session and in the final session.

In general, self-reports and teacher and counselor observations suggest that assertive training led to positive behavior changes in a number of participants.

Sixth-Grade Boys Group

This group was composed of two target students considered aggresive by their teacher and themselves and two teacher-chosen models. The two aggressive boys behaved well most of the time but were subject to extreme outbursts of temper, often over small incidents. At the end of the training, Fred reported that he was now able to talk things over with someone rather than get angry. His teacher's perceptions supported Fred's self-evaluation. The teacher reported that Fred's temper outbursts in the classroom had virtually ceased.

Dan, the other target student, felt that he still lost his temper too much but felt freer to talk with friends about things that bothered him. Dan's teacher noticed no behavior changes in Dan but had discovered that an impending divorce in Dan's family may have been contributing to his problems. Dan's case serves to remind us that aggression may be a symptom of problems that cannot always be dealt with in assertive-training groups. Correct diagnosis of a student's problem is essential (see Cautions).

Fifth-Grade Girls Group

All the girls in this group chose to participate because they saw themselves as nonaggressive, often victims of the whims of others with anecdotes about successful assertive behavior recently attempted. At the end of the training, all reported an increased ability to say "No" to unreasonable requests. The leader noticed that they were able to use firm voices and to maintain eye contact in role playing at the end of the training. This group was the most enthusiastic of all groups; several girls brought in self-created cartoon situations for other group members to fill in, one girl created a board game on assertion, and the group organized a party for the final session.

Mixed-Sex Sixth-Grade Group

It is interesting that this group seemed to make the least progress of all the groups. Participants often seemed reluctant to share their feelings and experiences in front of others. The group process was punctuated by giggles or embarrassed silences. Although all participants stated that they enjoyed the group and found it valuable, the group members did not often report successful instances of assertive behavior to the group. It may be that I should have screened applicants to this group more carefully, or perhaps it is generally more difficult to teach assertive behavior in mixed groups (Jakubowski in press b).

CAUTIONS

Alberti and Emmons (1974) warn that leaders of assertive-training groups must be able to recognize when an individual might benefit from assertive training and when other types of intervention might be more appropriate. Leaders should have training in group dynamics, behavior therapy, and in the use of such important components of the assertive-training process as behavior rehearsal. Counselors who would like to use assertive training in their schools should assess their own ability to be assertive in interpersonal relations. Courses in assertive training might help counselors improve their own skills as well as familiarize them with the training procedures. Counselors are referred to Lange and Jakubowski (1976) for a thorough discussion of these procedures.

SUMMARY

The tentative results from the groups described in this article indicate that assertive training, if presented by an experienced leader, might help intermediate and junior high school students deal with a variety of problems related to lack of assertion skills, Shyness, uncontrollable temper, lack of initiative, boredom, difficulty with teasing, difficulty in saying "No" - counselors can asses to what extent these problems are related to poor assertion skills and use assertive training in individual counseling or in groups to deal with these problems. Counselors might also consider using assertive training to help students come to terms with changing sex roles and to aid students in developing decision-making skills.

In summary, a potentially valuable task for counselors would be to examine and research assertive training as a method for helping young people within a preventive framwork.

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taken from, "Assertiveness Training for Young People" by Meg Rashbaum-Selig in The School Counselor, November, 1976.

Relaxation Training for Children

TASK DIRECTIONS

Following is a sample relaxation training script for use with elementary-aged children. Read it at your own leisure outside the workshop.

Children experience some degree of tension at one time or another in the elementary grades. This tension can range from an "uptight" feeling right before an unprepared for oral book report to a generalized tension and worry throughout the day. Some children experience discomfort during specific subject matter periods, others when beginning a new task, while others become upset after a correction from the teacher. Pressure to succeed, to always be right, to be liked, to have approval, or to cope with family problems can produce tension in a child.

Relaxation exercises designed especially for children can help them to become aware of the feelings of body tension and provide skills to reduce it. Children can be taught how to reduce their muscle tension, and this seems to reduce anxiety as well. There was one boy whose arms and legs seemed like perpetual motion machines, yet he showed no awareness of this manifest tension. He mentioned that his parents were considering "putting me on some kind of pills to help me pay attention better." Though he denied any feelings of tension, he agreed to try a few relaxation exercises. He worked hard on the exercises but said he didn't feel any different afterward. Five minutes later his puzzled expression became a grin as he said, "It worked!"

Relaxation training can take place during individual or group counseling sessions, in physical education classes, or in a regular classroom setting. Once children develop the skills, they can relax without instructions from a trainer and thereby implement a higher degree of self-control. If successful mastery of academic tasks, then perhaps a case could be made for improved self-concept as well.

In training children to relax various muscle groups, it is not necessary that they be able to identify and locate them. The use of the child's fantasy can be incorporated into the instructions in such a manner that the appropriate muscle groups will automatically be used. Some precedent for the use of fantasy in a similar context was set by Lazarus and Abramovitz (1962). The use of fantasy also serves to attract and maintain a child's interest. One child told his counselor that the exercises stopped the butterflies in his stomach. The butterfly imagery expressed a real feeling for him; it has been replaced by the feelings connoted by a laxy cat.

It has been noted that although children will agree that they want to learn how to relax, they don't want to practice their newly acquired skills under the watchful eyes of their classmates. Fortunately, several muscle groups can be relaxed without much gross motor activity, and practice can go unnoticed. It pleases some children to perform these exercises in class and relax themselves without drawing the attention of those around them. It seemed important to one little girl that the exercises be "our secret" that "we won't tell the other kids." The effects of this type of training can extend beyond the classroom. A fourth-grade boy said that he used the exercises to help him get to sleep at night.

Below is a relaxation script designed for and used successfully with children in the intermediate grades. This script is similar in design to those used with adults (Carkhuff 1969; Lazarus 1971) but is intended to be more appealing to children. It is likely that the script is equally appropriate for children in the primary grades. Counselors are encouraged to experiment with it and to revise and extend it to include specific interests of children and incorporate other muscle groups. Eight muscle groups are included here. Other exercises can be developed to work with the upper thighs, upper arms, and different muscles around the face and neck as well as the flexing muscles in the feet and extending muscles in the hands.

In working with this script it is recommended that no more than fifteen minutes be devoted to the exercises at any one time. In the initial training sessions the children are learning a new concept and new material. Two or three short sessions per week will help to establish these new behaviors. Aside from theoretical considerations, it is just too hard for some children to keep their eyes closed for more than fifteen minutes. Later sessions serve more to maintain the skills and provide a foundation for work in other areas. This type session can follow a weekly pattern with ten or fifteen minutes devoted to relaxation, and the remainder fo the time can be spent on other things.

It should be noted that many of the instructions should be repeated many more times than are indicated in the script and that such repetitions have been intentionally deleted. Each child or group of children is unique. Timing and pacing must follow the individual pattern created in the specific situation. One word of caution requires consideration: Children tend to "get into" this type of experience as much or more than adults, and they are likely to be a bit disoriented if the session ends abruptly. Preparing children to leave the relaxed state is just as important as proper introduction and timing.

A Relaxation Training Script

Introduction

Today we're going to do some special kinds of exercises called "relaxation exercises." These exercises help you learn how to relax when you're feeling uptight and help you get rid of those butterflies-in-your-stomach kinds of feelings. They're also kind of neat, because you can do some of them in the classroom without anybody noticing.

In order for you to get the best feelings from these exercises, there are some rules you must follow. First, you must do exactly what I say, even if it seems kind of silly. Second, you must try hard to do what I say. Third, you must pay attention to your body. Throughout these exercises, pay attention to how your muscles feel when they are tight and when they are loose and relaxed. And, fourth, you must practice. The more you practice, the more relaxed you can get. Does anyone have any questions?

Are you ready to begin? Okay. First, get as comfortable as you can in your chair. Sit back, get both feet on the floor, and just let your arms hang loose. That's fine. Now close your eyes and don't open them until I say to. Remember to follow my instructions very carefully, try hard, and pay attention to your body. Here we go.

Hands and Arms

Pretend you have a whole lemon in your left hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon. Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed. Take another lemon and squeeze it. Try to squeeze this one harder than you did the first one. That's right. Real hard. Now drop your lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Once again, take a lemon in your left hand and squeeze all the juice out. Don't leave a single drop. Squeeze hard. Good. Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand. (Repeat the process for the right hand and arm.)

Arms and Shoulders

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, kittens, let's stretch again. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them over your head. Pull them back, way back. Pull hard. Now let them drop quickly. Good. Notice how your shoulders feel more relaxed. This time let's have a great big stretch. Try to touch the ceiling. Stretch your arms way out in front of you. Raise them way up high over your head. Push them way, way back. Notice the tension and pull in your arms and shoulders. Hold tight, now. Great. Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Shoulder and Neck

Now pretend you are a turtle. You're sitting out on a rock by a nice, peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun. It feels nice and warm and safe here. Oh-oh! You sense danger. Pull your head into your house. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. It isn't easy to be a turtle in a shell. The danger is past now. You can come out into the warm sunshine, and, once again, you can relax and feel the warm sunshine. Watch out now! More danger. Hurry, pull your head back into your house and hold it tight. You have to be closed in tight to protect yourself. Okay, you can relax now. Bring your head out and let your shoulders relax. Notice how much better it feels to be relaxed than to be all tight. One more time, now. Danger! Pull your head in. Push your shoulders way up to your ears and hold tight. Don't let even a tiny piece of your head show outside your shell. Hold it. Feel the tenseness in your neck and shoulders. Okay. You can come out now. It's safe again. Relax and feel comfortable in your safety. There's no more danger. Nothing to worry about. Nothing to be afraid of. You feel good.

Jaw

You have a giant jawbreaker bubble gum in your mouth. It's very hard to chew. Bite down on it. Hard! Let your neck muscles help you. Now relax. Just let your jaw hang loose. Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop. Okay, let's tackle that jawbreaker again now. Bite down. Hard! Try to squeeze it out between your teeth. That's good. You're really tearing that gum up. Now relax again. Just let your jaw drop off your face. It feels so good just to let go and not have to fight that bubble gum. Okay, one more time. We're really going to tear it up this time. Bite down. Hard as you can. Harder. Oh, you're really working hard. Good. Now relax. Try to relax your whole body. You've beaten the bubble gum. Let yourself go as loose as you can.

Face and Nose

Here comes a pesky old fly. He has landed on your nose. Try to get him off without using your hands. That's right, wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch your nose up real hard. Good. You've chased him away. Now you can relax your nose. Ooops, here he comes back again. Right back in the middle of your nose. Wrinkle up your nose again. Shoo him off. Wrinkle it up hard. Hold it just as tight as you can. Okay, he flew away. You can relax your face. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose that your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help you, and they get tight, too. So when you relax your nose, your whole face relaxes too, and that feels good. Oh-oh. This time that old fly has come back, but this time he's on your forehead. Make lots of wrinkles. Try to catch him between all those wrinkles. Hold it tight, now. Okay, you can let go. He's gone for good. Now you can just relax. Let your face go smooth, no wrinkles anywhere. Your face feels nice and smooth and relaxed.

Stomach

Hey! Here comes a cute baby elephant. But he's not watching where he's going. He doesn't see you lying there in the grass, and he's about to step on your stomach. Don't move. You don't have time to get out of the way. Just get ready for him. Make your stomach very hard. Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight. Hold it. It looks like he is going the other way. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. Oops, he's coming this way again. Get ready. Tighten up your stomach. Real hard. If he steps on you when your stomach is hard, it won't hurt. Make your stomach into a rock. Okay, he's moving away again. You can relax now. Kind of settle down, get comfortable, and relax. Notice the difference between a tight stomach and a relaxed one. That's how we want it to feel--nice and loose and relaxed. You won't believe this, but this time he's really coming your way and no turning around. He's headed straight for you. Tighten up. Tighten hard. Here he comes. This is really it. You've got to hold on tight. He's stepping on you. He's stepped over you. Now he's gone for good. You can relax completely. You're safe. Everything is okay, and you can feel nice and relaxed.

This time imagine that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence and the boards have splinters on them. You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through. Suck your stomach in. Try to squeeze it up against your backbone. Try to be as skinny as you can. You've got to get through. Now relax. You don't have to be skinny now. Just relax and feel your stomach being warm and loose. Okay, let's try to get through that fence now. Squeeze up your stomach. Make it touch

your backbone. Get it real small and tight. Get as skinny as you can. Hold tight, now. You've got to squeeze through. You got through that skinny little fence and no splinters. You can relax now. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs. You can feel really good now. You've done fine.

Legs and Feet

Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed. Back into the mud puddle. Squish your toes down. Let your leg muscles help push your feet down. Push your feet. Hard. Try to squeeze that mud puddle dry. Okay. Come back out now. Relax your feet, relax your legs, relax your toes. It feels so good to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel kind of warm and tingly.

Conclusion

Stay as relaxed as you can. Let your whole body go limp and feel all your muscles relaxed. In a few minutes I will ask you to open your eyes, and that will be the end of this session. As you go through the day, remember how good it feels to be relaxed. Sometimes you have to make yourself tighter before you can be relaxed, just as we did in these exercises. Practice these exercises every day to get more and more relaxed. A good time to practice is at night, after you have gone to bed and the lights are out and you won't be disturbed. It will help you get to sleep. Then, when you are a really good relaxer, you can help yourself relax here at school. Just remember the elephant, or the jaw breaker, or the mud puddle, and you can do our exercises and nobody will know. Today is a good day, and you are ready to go back to class feeling very relaxed. You've worked hard in here, and it feels good to work hard. Very slowly, now, open your eyes and wiggle your muscles around a little. Very good. You've done a good job. You're going to be a super relaxer.

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